

MAY 28 2008 →

6/11 - 5

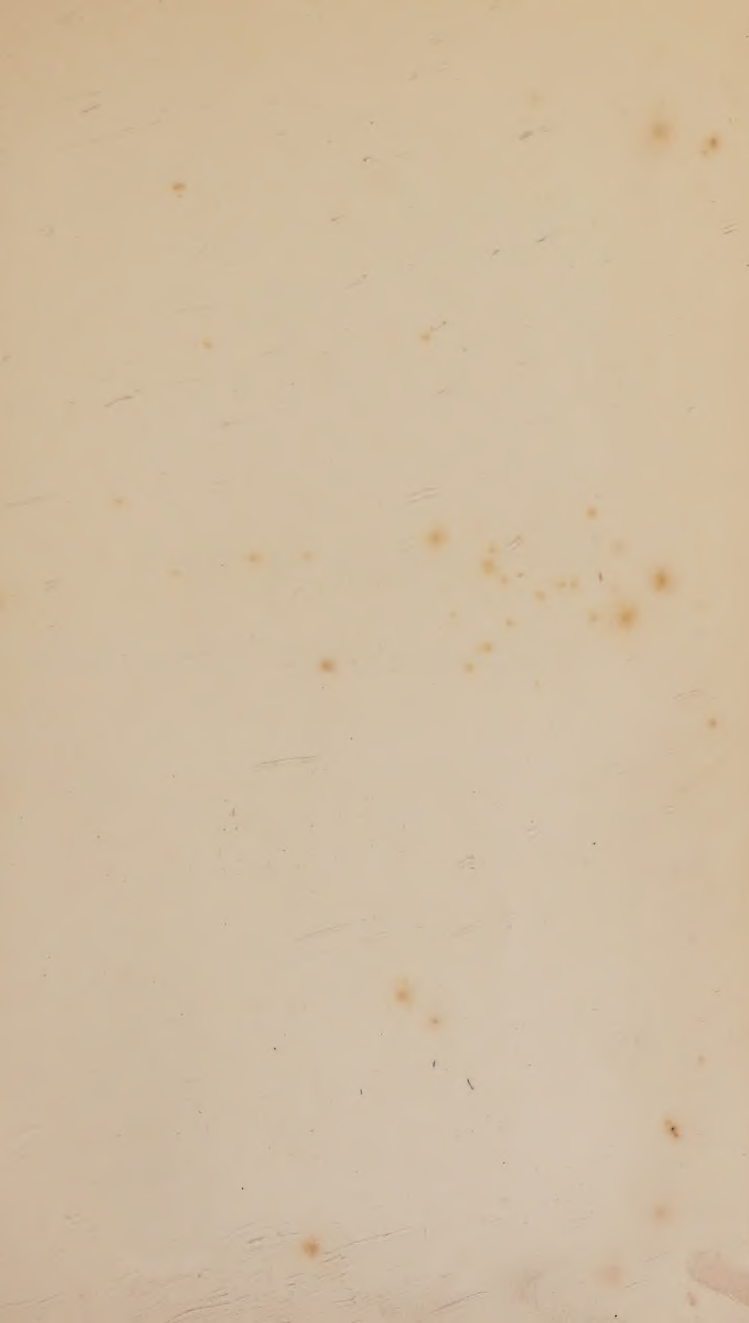
B.C.

BS 1422 .F68 1870

**Bible. O.T. Psalms. English. Great
Bible. 1870.**

The Psalms chronologically arranged
: an amended version with historical

9





THE PSALMS

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED.

Cambridge :

PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A.
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

THE PSALMS

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

AN AMENDED VERSION
WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS
AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

BY

FOUR FRIENDS

"It shall greatly helpe ye to understonde Scripture, yf thou marke not onely what is spoken or wrytten, but of whom, unto whom, with what wordes, at what tyme, where, to what intent, with what circumstance, consyderynge what goeth before and what followeth after."

*Prologue of MILES COVERDALE, sometime Bishop of Exeter.
Translator with TYNDAL of the Psalms in the Great Bible.*

SECOND EDITION.

London :
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1870

[All Rights reserved.]

PROPERTY OF
THE CHURCH ON THE WAY

TO
HENRY EWALD,
IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION OF HIS IMMENSE SERVICES
IN THE
HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION
OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

PREFACE.

THE Editors believe that much force will be added to the moral and religious lessons of the Psalter by an examination of the time and circumstances in which the several Psalms were written; that much light will be gained from an endeavour to attain the point of view of the writers, and that each Psalm so looked at will in most cases tell its own tale. They believe also that the spiritual meaning, though it may appear for a moment obscured, will in the end come out all the more fully from this historical treatment.

For the common arrangement of the Psalms into five books and for the order of these books no principle has been discovered which commands anything like general assent or which even claims to throw any light upon the meaning of the Psalms; nor does the difficulty of rearranging them with reference to their several times and occasions appear insuperable. If, with the utmost care bestowed upon the language of the Psalms and the history of the times to which they may apply, it is impossible to discover the exact time and occasion of every Psalm, yet there are few of which we cannot ascertain to what group

and to what period they belong, while to many the exact time and occasion may with reasonable certainty be assigned.

Another circumstance, which has in no small degree impaired a due appreciation not only of the lyrical beauty but often of the very meaning of the Psalms, is the loss of the strophes and lines of the original. In both the Bible and the Prayer-Book Versions they are printed like those portions of the sacred writings, which were written in prose, while the division into verses generally adopted in our Bibles has, equally in poetry and in prose, destroyed the connection of the thought. In the arrangement here adopted, while the number of each verse has been retained for the sake of reference, the larger and smaller divisions—the strophes and the lines—have been restored. The eye is everywhere the minister of the mind; it is so in a more than usual degree in the poems of a language, which deals so largely as the Hebrew in curious parallelisms and nicely wrought balance of structure.

Further, many errors have crept into the version of the Prayer-Book of the Church of England,—chiefly owing to the influence of Jerome's Latin Translation,—which leave the verses in which they occur unintelligible.

To restore the Psalter as far as possible to the order in which the Psalms were written,—to give the division of each Psalm into strophes, of each strophe into the lines which composed it,—to amend the errors of translation, are the objects of the present Edition.

No single person seemed so well qualified to afford the necessary guidance in this work, both by his consummate ability and erudition as an Oriental scholar and by his wonderful insight into Jewish history and by the devotion of a long and laborious life to these and kindred subjects, as Professor Henry Ewald.

In the first of the three points mentioned above, his chronological arrangement has been accepted, not with any wish to press its several conclusions but in the belief that it is generally true and invariably suggestive ; in the second, his metrical divisions have been implicitly followed ; but in the third, no amendments have been admitted without a careful examination of the principal commentators. The Editors, in concluding a work in which they have drawn largely from the rich mine of his writings on the 'Poets' and 'Prophets of the Old Testament' and 'The History of the People of Israel,' wish to express their profound sense of his immense services in the cause of biblical research. Personally they wish also to express their gratitude for his kindness, not only in allowing them to make whatever use of his labours seemed most likely to serve for edification to English readers, but in sending them the sheets of his 3rd edition of 'the Psalms' while passing through the press, and in answering with unvarying patience and courtesy any questions which they had occasion to ask in the course of the work.

The version of the Psalms followed in this volume is that of the great Bible of 1540, adopted in the Book of Common Prayer for the Church of England in 1548, and retained there when the new and more accurate translation of the Psalms from the Hebrew was substituted for it in the present Authorised Version of James I. This version, though in many passages less accurate, has an intrinsic beauty and force and so surpassing an excellence, that it has insensibly become the expression of the religious feeling of the nation. Dr Nicholls¹ has well expressed the feeling of all who have studied the Prayer-Book and the Bible Versions, when he says, "the translation in the Prayer-

¹ On the Book of Common Prayer. London, 1775. Note on the Great Bible.

Book is very plain and easy and fitter for devotion than any one extant, by reason that the Hebraisms are not so much retained as in the others, and notwithstanding some persons' objections, it is nigher the original than those who have not examined it may imagine." In numberless instances a careful consideration of the two¹ Versions has led the Editors to feel that 'the greater divergence is the higher unity.' No amendment therefore has been introduced unless to remove obscurity or actual error, and great care has been taken to introduce no diction discordant with the adopted text. The fact that each Psalm has passed through four hands is some guarantee that no alteration has been made upon light grounds.

It is hoped that by these means something may have been gained for the edification of the general reader by putting before him a clear and intelligible text, and by throwing such light upon the times and circumstances of the several Psalms as may suffice to remove some of the difficulties known to every serious student. It was chiefly a sense of these difficulties, that induced the Editors to undertake the labour of which the present volume is the fruit.

Easter, 1867.

¹ In the course of this work the Bible or Authorised Version is always referred to by the letters A. V.; that of the Prayer-Book by P. B.; while § refers to the sections of this book.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

THE publication of a Second Edition has been delayed by the issue of a popular edition of the same work in an abridged form¹. In the meantime the whole of the matter contained in the First Edition has been carefully reconsidered and to a great extent recast; the historical introductions in the latter part of the book have been considerably enlarged, not only by the addition of new matter but also by many fresh illustrations from the writings of the contemporary Prophets; while a supplement has been added, containing the chief specimens of Hebrew lyric poetry not included in the Book of Psalms. It seemed to the Editors that a treatise on the Psalter could hardly be considered complete, which did not embrace compositions having so direct a bearing on its contents as the Lamentations of Jeremiah, the Thanksgivings of Hezekiah and Jonah, the Triumphal Songs of Miriam and Deborah, and the 'Pindaric Ode' of Habakkuk. This supplement can be supplied separately to those who have the First Edition.

Michaelmas, 1870.

¹ *The Golden Treasury Psalter.* Student's Edition, Macmillan, 1870.

INDEX TO FIND THE PSALMS.

Psalm	Section	Day of Month.	Psalm	Section	Day of Month.
I.	§ 60	1 Morning.	XLV.	§ 23	9 Morning.
II.	§ 16	"	XLVI.	§ 35	"
III.	§ 14	"	XLVII.	§ 115	Evening.
IV.	§ 15	"	XLVIII.	§ 36	"
V.	§ 44	"	XLIX.	§ 66	"
VI.	§ 26	Evening.	L.	§ 59	10 Morning.
VII.	§ 2	"	LI.	§ 75	"
VIII.	§ 9	"	LII.	§ 46	"
IX. X.	§ 61	2 Morning.	LIII.	§ 84	Evening.
XI.	§ 1	"	LIV.	§ 48	"
XII.	§ 31	Evening.	LV.	§ 43	"
XIII.	§ 27	"	LVI.	§ 51	11 Morning.
XIV.	§ 84	"	LVII.	§ 52	"
XV.	§ 5	3 Morning.	LVIII.	§ 53	"
XVI.	§ 65	"	LIX.	§ 54	Evening.
XVII.	§ 64	"	LX. v. 6-9.	§ 11	"
XVIII.	§ 12	Evening.	LX.	§ 125	"
XIX.	§ 8	4 Morning.	LXI.	§ 49	"
XX.	§ 21	"	LXII.	§ 32	12 Morning.
XXI.	§ 22	"	LXIII.	§ 50	"
XXII.	§ 69	Evening.	LXIV.	§ 45	"
XXIII.	§ 25	"	LXV.	§ 39	Evening.
XXIV. v. 1-6.	§ 4	5 Morning.	LXVI. v. 1-11.	§ 116	"
XXIV. v. 7-10.	§ 3	"	LXVI. v. 12-18.	§ 30	"
XXV.	§ 77	"	LXVII.	§ 113	"
XXVI.	§ 55	"	LXVIII.	§ 114	13 Morning.
XXVII.	§ 24	Evening.	LXIX.	§ 73	Evening.
XXVIII.	§ 56	"	LXX.	§ 72	"
XXIX.	§ 7	"	LXXI.	§ 76	14 Morning.
XXX.	§ 28	6 Morning.	LXXII.	§ 63	"
XXXI.	§ 57	"	LXXIII.	§ 80	Evening.
XXXII.	§ 13	Evening.	LXXIV.	§ 120	"
XXXIII.	§ 150	"	LXXV.	§ 38	15 Morning.
XXXIV.	§ 78	"	LXXVI.	§ 37	"
XXXV.	§ 70	7 Morning.	LXXVII.	§ 81	"
XXXVI.	§ 47	"	LXXVIII.	§ 128	Evening.
XXXVII.	§ 62	Evening.	LXXIX.	§ 121	16 Morning.
XXXVIII.	§ 71	8 Morning.	LXXX.	§ 122	"
XXXIX.	§ 33	"	LXXXI.	§ 129	"
XL.	§ 72	"	LXXXII.	§ 83	Evening.
XLI.	§ 29	Evening.	LXXXIII.	§ 127	"
XLII. XLIII.	§ 67	"	LXXXIV.	§ 68	"
XLIV.	§ 119	9 Morning.	LXXXV.	§ 126	"

INDEX TO FIND THE PSALMS.

xiii

Psalm	Section	Day of Month.
LXXXVI.	§ 140	17 Morning.
LXXXVII.	§ 99	"
LXXXVIII.	§ 58	"
LXXXIX.	§ 124	Evening.
XC.	§ 34	18 Morning.
XCL.	§ 117	"
XCII.	§ 105	"
XCIII.	§ 106	Evening.
XCIV.	§ 82	"
XCV.	§ 111	19 Morning.
XCVI.	§ 109	"
XCVII.	§ 107	"
XCVIII.	§ 110	Evening.
XCIX.	§ 108	"
C.	§ 112	"
CI.	§ 6	"
CII.	§ 79	20 Morning.
CIII.	§ 131	"
CIV.	§ 132	Evening.
CV.	§ 144	21 Morning.
CVI.	§ 133	Evening.
CVII.	§ 134	22 Morning.
CVIII.	§ 143	Evening.
CIX.	§ 74	"
CX.	§ 10	23 Morning.
CXI.	§ 135	"
CXII.	§ 136	"
CXIII.	§ 137	"
CXIV.	§ 138	Evening.
CXV.	§ 102	"
CXVI.	§ 103	24 Morning.
CXVII.	§ 139	"
CXVIII.	§ 101	"
CXIX.	§ 130	24 E.—26 E.
CXX.	§ 85	27 Morning.
CXXI.	§ 86	"
CXXII.	§ 98	"
CXXIII.	§ 87	"
CXXIV.	§ 90	"
CXXV.	§ 92	"
CXXVI.	§ 93	27 Evening.
CXXVII.	§ 94	"

Psalm	Section	Day of Month.
CXXVIII.	§ 95	27 Evening.
CXXIX.	§ 91	"
CXXX.	§ 88	"
CXXXI.	§ 89	"
CXXXII.	§ 123	28 Morning.
CXXXIII.	§ 96	"
CXXXIV.	§ 97	"
CXXXV.	§ 145	"
CXXXVI.	§ 146	Evening.
CXXXVII.	§ 100	"
CXXXVIII.	§ 104	"
CXXXIX.	§ 118	29 Morning.
CXL.	§ 40	"
CXLI.	§ 41	"
CXLII.	§ 42	Evening.
CXLIII.	§ 141	"
CXLIV.	§ 142	30 Morning.
CXLIV. 12-15.	§ 17	"
CXLV.	§ 147	"
CXLVI.	§ 148	"
CXLVII.	§ 149	Evening.
CXLVIII.	§ 152	"
CXLIX.	§ 151	"
CL.	§ 153	"
Gen. IV. 23, 24	§ 154	
Exod. xv.	§ 155	
Deut. xxxii.	§ 160	
Judges v.	§ 156	
1 Sam. II. 1—10.	§ 157	
2 Sam. I. 19—27	§ 18	
2 Sam. III. 33—34	§ 19	
2 Sam. XXIII. 1—7	§ 20	
Isaiah xxxviii. 9—20	§ 159	
Lamentations	§ 162	
Jonah II.	§ 158	
Habakkuk III.	§ 161	
Appendix A.—The Psalter.....	p. 431	
B.—Superscriptions	p. 438	
Glossary	p. 445	
Index I.—Difficult Passages...	p. 450	
II.—Quotations from Old Testament.....	p. 453	
General Index	p. 460	

THE PSALMS

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED.

PERIOD I.

PSALMS OF DAVID.

PERIOD I.

THE PSALMS OF DAVID AND OF HIS TIME.

OF David we know from the sacred history, that he was the king and the Psalmist of Israel. No other man was either king or Psalmist in the same sense, and hence he is rightly styled not only the Founder of the Hebrew monarchy, but of the Hebrew Psalter.

As God raised up Moses to give to His people and to His Church an institute of law, so He raised up David to be His viceroy and to wield His sceptre upon earth, and further to be the sweet singer of Israel, that in him both His people then and His Church for all time might have a 'rule for uttering its gladness and its glory, its lamentation and its grief.'

Of this king and Psalmist we know further both his character and the circumstances of his life; how God richly endowed his character with gifts and capacities and affections manifold, and trained and matured it by circumstances, which brought all those

gifts to their perfection. 'He brought him up among the sheep pastures, that the groundwork of his character might be laid among simple and universal forms of feeling. He took him to the camp and made him a conqueror, that he might be filled with nobleness of soul and ideas of glory. He placed him in the palace, that he might be filled with ideas of majesty and sovereign might. He carried him to the wilderness and placed him in solitudes, that his soul might dwell alone in the sublime conceptions of God and His mighty works; and He kept him there for long years with only one step between him and death, that he might be well-schooled to trust and depend upon the providence of God¹.' Moreover, He framed him of force both of body and mind, such as to make him the natural successor to those great captains and chiefs, who had in earlier times achieved the conquests and maintained the position of the chosen people; of such surpassing grace, as to intertwine his name and his memory amid the very heart-strings of the nation; and withal of such tenderness and depth of emotion, as to make him the faithfulest of friends, the most affectionate of fathers, of subjects the most loyal, and,—whether in pathetic compassion for his people or in the sternness of his rule,—the most royal of kings.

Such is the portrait of David presented to us by history. If we turn from it to that collection of Psalms, which, though probably formed by the union of smaller collections, has from David's pre-eminence as the Psalmist of Israel been always rightly called by his name, and if we put to ourselves this question, which of these many Psalms bear the impress of his wonderful character, what answer do we receive?

History assigns to David by name the most sublime of all autobiographies, the marvellous summary both of his inner and

¹ Irving. Introduction to Horne on the Psalms.

of his outer life, bequeathed to us in a double version in the 18th psalm, and in the 2nd Book of Samuel; it further gives us his lament over Saul and Jonathan¹, his lament over Abner², and those last words³, which 'the spirit of Jehovah uttered by his lips' as a parting lesson to the whole nation. The three latter, though not given in the Psalter, have in this version been inserted in those periods of his life to which they respectively belong⁴. Besides these, we find the peculiar marks of David's thought and expression indelibly stamped upon thirteen Psalms; his sense of his own dignity of soul, his 'honour⁵,' upon the 7th and 3rd; his belief⁶ that he is set apart by God's grace and wonderfully raised above all other men, upon the 4th and 110th. No king but David had such a sense of his majesty⁷ as is expressed in the 101st, or of the prophetic⁸ authority with which he meets his enemies, or of tender regard⁹ for his people's welfare, as we find in the 3rd and 4th. The sternness of his rule¹⁰ is marked in the 3rd, his love of nature, springing from his shepherd life, in the 8th, the 19th, and still more vividly in the 29th; perhaps also, in the 23rd. The occasion of the 32nd is to be sought in the deep repentance for the great sin of his life, which is recorded in the 12th chapter of the 2nd book of Samuel; and of the two Psalms, which are joined together in the 24th of our Psalter, the first¹¹ refers to the carrying up of the ark to Jerusalem, while the second¹², alike with the 15th, concerns the qualifications of life and character necessary to those who would worship in that Holy Place or dwell in that

¹ 2 Sam. i. 19—27.

² 2 Sam. iii. 33, 34.

³ 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7.

⁴ § 17, 18, 19.

⁵ § 2. vii. 5, 'lay mine honour in the dust;' § 14. iii. 3; § 12. xviii. 43—48; 2 Sam. vi. 21.

⁶ § 15. iv. 3; § 12. xviii. 20—30; § 10. cx. 1; 2 Sam. vi. 21.

⁷ § 12. xviii. 43—45; § 20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 17.

⁸ § 15. iv. 2—5.

⁹ § 14. iii. 8; § 7. xxix. 10; 2 Sam. vi. 18; § 2. vii. 29.

¹⁰ § 14. iii. 7; § 12. xviii. 34—42; § 3. xxiv. 8; 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7.

¹¹ Comprised in vv. 7—10 of the 24th Psalm.

¹² Comprised in vv. 1—6 of the same.

Holy City ; and the 11th, marked as David's by peculiarities of expression¹ occurring only in David's Psalms, belongs to that earlier part of David's life, his persecution by Saul, of which the historical notices are most scanty.

These Psalms at least are undoubtedly David's. They are marked not only by his flood of rich thought, not fully comprehended and taken up into the national life till in later times, and by the creative power which gave it such facile expression, but by the imagery in which that thought is clothed. This imagery is peculiar, yet well suited to the life of hardship² and danger which David led. We seem to see him rejoicing that his corn and wine and oil were increased³, and fleeing from his enemies that bend their bow and make ready their arrows upon the string⁴. The words 'shield' and 'rock,' which passed into metaphors in after times, had a reality to a man who for long years carried his life in his hand ; who, fleeing from cave to cave, had no fortress but Jehovah, no panoply but the sure protection of the Almighty. Such figures are nowhere to be found in the earlier but equally warlike songs of Exodus and Judges⁵.

The key-note struck by David in these seventeen Psalms reverberates with a hundred varying echoes through the whole Psalter ; sometimes loud and clear, as in the 2nd⁶ and also in the 23rd, the 27th, the 64th, and the 138th⁷ ; sometimes faintly, as in the fragments inlaid in Psalms of a later time⁸.

¹ The discussion of the linguistic reasons, which have induced Hebrew scholars, with scarcely an exception, to assign at least these Psalms to David, hardly comes within the province of this work.

² § 2. vii. 7 ; § 1. xi. 2 ; § 12. xviii. 4, 5, 17, 18 ; § 8. xix. 5 ; § 13. xxxii. 10.

³ § 15. iv. 8.

⁴ § 1. xi. 2.

⁵ Ex. xv. Judges v.

⁶ Written, if not by David, in or near his time.

⁷ All written in David's spirit, if not by his pen : all breathing much of David's elevation of soul.

⁸ § 11. lx. 6—9 ; § 114. lxviii. 13—18 ; §§ 142 and 17. cxliv. 1—11 and 12—15. Compare note on Composite Psalms, § 24. xxvii. and Appendix A.

The number of Psalms here attributed to David is apparently small ; yet it is to be remarked that there is no side of his varied character which does not in them find its expression ; that there is no great turning point in his chequered life which is not set forth with a power, such as could only spring from a personal experience. This is assuredly no slight confirmation of the fact that these Psalms, selected on other grounds as indubitably composed by David, were really his work.

The chronological arrangement has been taken without alteration from Ewald's great work.

NOTE.—Perhaps most readers of the Psalms would be inclined to regard many more than these seventeen as composed by David. Such is possibly the case. All that is intended to be asserted here is that these are beyond all reasonable doubt from his pen ; for in each and all of them the great heart of the king is manifest ; and in none is there any sentiment or expression, which, like the 18th and 19th verses of the 51st Psalm¹, points to a later age. It may be stated again here, once for all, as it has been already stated in the Preface, that there is no intention to press each single conclusion to which Ewald has come. His arrangement has been accepted as a whole ; as full of suggestive thought, edifying and generally most satisfactory. He has brought an amount of learning to bear upon this subject, at least equal to that of any other commentator ; he is marked by a rare honesty and singleness of purpose ; and he has brought into clearer light than any previous writer the greatness of David's reign as the central point of the Hebrew monarchy, and the grandeur of his genius as at least the founder, if not the author, of the Psalter.

¹ § 75.

PERIOD I.

PSALMS OF DAVID.

[SECTIONS 1—20.]

§ 1. PSALM XI.¹

THIS Psalm must be referred to the early times of David's life, when he had to maintain an unequal struggle against the unrelenting jealousy of Saul. Well might his friends despair: they were already in peril on every side² from the treachery of an unscrupulous foe, and now there opens before them an interminable vista of dangers, which would be the lot of the righteous in a time of anarchy³ and misrule. But their cowardly fears, so far from shaking David's trust in God, only give him an occasion for pouring forth in song the firm and simple faith⁴ with which his heart is full.

I. *The Psalmist's answer to the despairing utterances of his companions:*

In Jehovah put I my trust! how say ye then to my soul: 1

'flee, O ye birds, unto your hill'?—

'For lo, the ungodly bend their bow, 2

'they make ready their arrow upon the string,

'to shoot privily at them that are true of heart!'—

'If the foundations be rooted up, 3

'what shall the righteous do?'

II. *he comforteth his soul with his conviction of the justice of God:*

Jehovah is in His holy palace, 4

the throne of Jehovah is in heaven;

Ver. 1. *unto your hill*; i. e. so as to be safe from the snare of the fowler, who sets his nets on the plain; a proverbial expression: the image is continued in ver. 2.

The three utterances in vv. 1, 2, and 3 are disconnected suggestions of despair from David's friends.

Ver. 3. *the foundations*, i. e. of social order, meaning, the eternal principles of right and wrong upon which society is based; cp. § 38. lxxv. 3, 4.

¹ On the common arrangement of the Psalter, see Appendix A.

² v. 2: cp. 1 Sam. xviii. 9, 11; xix. 1, 11; xxii. 23; xxiii. 12, 19; xxvi. 2; xxvii. 1.

³ v. 3. Cp. 1 Sam. xxii. 19, 21.

⁴ vv. 1, 6, 8.

His eyes behold, His eyelids try, the children of men; 5
 Jehovah trieth the righteous; 6
 but the ungodly and him that loveth wickedness doth His
 soul abhor;
 upon the ungodly He raineth coals of fire and brimstone, 7
 fiery heat is the portion of their cup.

III. *for He careth for the righteous.*

For Jehovah is righteous, and loveth righteousness: 8
 whoso is upright he shall behold His countenance.

Ver. 6. *trieth, i. e.* proveth. Faith is perfected by trial. Cp. James i. 12.

Ver. 7. The ungodly are represented (1) as overwhelmed by fire from heaven (cp. § 12. xviii. 12, 13; Gen. xix. 24), and (2) as compelled to drink in the deadly air of the Simoom.

§ 2. PSALM VII.

THE 7th Psalm breathes the feeling of the time when David and his band were daily evading the snares laid for them by the agents of Saul. It is occasioned by the treachery¹ of a friend, named in the tradition² as Cush, the Benjamite, of whom nothing is known from the history, but who as a member of the tribe of Benjamin was probably an adherent of the Benjamite king.

David, in the full consciousness of innocence, pours forth his indignation at the thought, that he who spared³ the life of his bitterest foe, should be treacherously assailed by the very arts which he so carefully eschewed.

He appeals to God to come down from heaven and hold a solemn judgment upon earth, where amidst the assembled tribes the integrity of His Anointed⁴ may be proved. He passes in imagination from the close of the judgment to the execution of the sentence, and in the thought of the eternity of God's justice the storm of passion is lulled to rest.

I. *The Psalmist pleadeth before God that his hands are clean from treachery:*

Jehovah, my God! in Thee have I put my trust: I
 save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me!

¹ *vv.* 3, 4.

³ 1 Sam. xxiv. 4; xxvi. 7.

² A. V. See Appendix B, On the Superscriptions.

⁴ *v.* 5, 1 Sam. xvi. 11.

lest he devour my soul like a lion, 2
 and tear it in pieces, while there is none to help!
 Jehovah, my God! if I have done any such thing, 3
 or if there be any wickedness in my hands;
 if I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me, 4
 —nay, I delivered him that without cause is mine enemy—
 then let mine enemy persecute my soul and take it, 5
 yea, let him tread my life down upon the earth,
 and lay mine honour in the dust!

II. *he trusteth his cause to the everlasting justice of God:*

Stand up, Jehovah, in Thy wrath, 6
 lift up Thyself with vengeance on mine oppressors!
 arise up for me, and command judgment!
 and let the congregation of the peoples come about Thee, 7
 and return Thou above their heads on high!
 Jehovah judgeth the peoples; give sentence in my cause, 8
 O Jehovah!
 according to my righteousness and mine innocency, so be
 it done unto me!
 let the wickedness of the ungodly come to an end, but 9
 stablish Thou the just,
 O righteous God, that triest the very hearts and reins. 10
 My shield is with God, 11
 who helpeth them that are true of heart;

Ver. 2. *he*: the change from plural to singular points to a special enemy.

Ver. 4. The abruptness with which the Psalmist interrupts the supposition of his treachery by a positive assertion of his generosity, together with metrical reasons, suggested to Ewald the idea that two lines have fallen out, which are thus supplied by a reference to 1 Sam. xxiv. 17:

‘If I have rewarded evil unto him that dealt friendly with me,
 [and enmity unto him that is at peace with me;
 yea, if I have not rewarded his evil with good],
 and delivered him that without cause is mine enemy.’

Ver. 7. *on high*. The Psalmist in a vision sees God leaving the judgment seat and returning to heaven. For similar prophetic visions of judgment, cp. 59. l. 3 and note.

Ver. 11. *with God*, i. e. kept in the armoury of God.

God is a judge of the righteous, 12
and a God that is angry every day.

III. *for He shall make the plots of the traitors recoil on themselves.*

May be he will whet his sword again! 13
yea, he bendeth his bow and maketh it ready,
he prepareth him weapons of death, 14
his arrows he maketh arrows of fire,
but lo! he travaileth with a thing of nought, 15
he conceiveth destruction and will bring forth deceit;
he made a grave and digged it deep, 16
and is fallen into the pit that he had made!
his mischief shall return upon his own head, 17
his violence shall fall on his own pate!
O let me praise Jehovah according to His righteousness, 18
let me sing praise to the name of Jehovah, the most High!

Ver. 12. *angry, i. e.* with the wicked, which the A. V. supplies.

Ver. 13. *he, i. e.* mine enemy.

Ver. 14. *arrows of fire.* Cp. Ephes. vi. 16, 'fiery darts,' a metaphor from the arrows tipped with fire used in sieges.

§§ 3—5. PSALMS XXIV. XV. CI.

THE establishment of David's kingdom, the capture of Jebus, the triumphal entry of the Ark from Kirjath-jearim, and the consecration of the city of David are commemorated in these three Psalms.

On the death of Ishbosheth the throne of Israel was vacant. David, already for seven years king of the two tribes in Hebron, was called on by the united voice of the nation to fill it. Full of the spirit and the power of the King of heaven, whose vicegerent on earth he was now to be, he fixed upon the stronghold of Jebus, as the capital of his new empire. This great fortress, hitherto believed to be impregnable, was presently taken by Joab, and became from that day the city of David.

But if the earthly king was to have his house there, so also was the heavenly King whose power he wielded: and accordingly David's first thought was to fetch the Ark from its exile at Kirjath-jearim. The first attempt to remove it was unsuccessful¹; but the king, true to his great purpose, of making his capital not only the political but the religious centre of the nation, made fresh preparations for conveying it to the Holy City; nothing was omitted which could render the triumphal procession worthy of the great occasion, which was to lead up the ark of God to His dwelling-place in Jerusalem. The procession was headed by David himself, in his double character of priest and king². Once more was heard the well-known shout which accompanied the raising of the ark during the journeys of the Israelites: 'Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered. Arise, O Lord, unto Thy rest; Thou and the ark of Thy strength.' The dance was led and accompanied on the harp by the king. Amid the pealing of trumpets and the shout as of a mighty host ringing through the valleys of Hinnom and of Kidron, the procession wound its way up the steep ascent to mount Zion.

Though the entire triumphal psalm is not preserved to us, we may form no indistinct idea of what it was, from the description of the holy procession in Chronicles and from the triumphal hymn of the restoration, which has been handed down to us in the 68th Psalm. The moment of its entry within the walls is described in one short³ psalm. To this another short psalm is prefixed, indicating the spirit in which alone the Holy Place should be approached. The two together form a single psalm in the Authorised Version.

One incident of the procession, at first sight trivial, throws a flood of light, not only upon the dramatic life of the scene, but upon the deep meaning, the new spirit which filled the soul of David⁴. To the contemptuous reproach of his wife, Saul's daughter, Michal, he replies that his dancing and playing was before the Lord, and that at such a moment of rejoicing he could not stay to think of outward honour for himself.

¹ 2 Sam. vi. 2.

³ § 3. xxiv. 7—10.

² § 10. cx.

⁴ 2 Sam. vi. 20—23.

In this incident we have the clue to that spiritual conception of his duties and position, which distinguished David from Saul. It was in fact his spiritual conception of the true Israel,—of the high privileges and duties of worshippers in the Holy Place¹, and above all of the privileges and duties of a king², as one who should carry out Jehovah's counsels upon earth, which distinguished David's reign not only from that of Saul, but from that of any subsequent Jewish monarch. Hence it was that the pious Israelites of later ages looked forward to the reestablishment of David's kingdom in the person of a descendant of David's house as their highest ideal, the ideal of a kingdom in which Israel should be triumphant over all its foes, and righteousness be established on the earth³.

§ 3. PSALM XXIV. 7—10.

THIS Psalm was sung at the triumphal⁴ entry of the Ark into the newly conquered city. The singers were two choirs of priests, the one bearing the Ark and approaching the gates, the other already stationed there as warders.

The approaching procession gives out its summons to the ancient gates of the fortress Jebus to exalt⁵ themselves for their new King, a mightier King than had ever entered before, Jehovah enthroned upon His ark and leading His army in triumph to take possession. The warders demand in astonishment, who this new King is? This demand is answered first by a declaration of the new and more glorious title, by which from this time forward God was to be known. He was no longer to be, as under the Patriarchs, Elohim, 'the strong ones;' nor as under Moses⁶, Jehovah, 'the Eternal;' but JEHOVAH GOD OF HOSTS, the Hosts of battle, the Hosts of heaven and earth. The change is important, and is brought prominently forward in the history⁷; David brought up the 'ark of God, whose name is called by

¹ Cp. § 4 and § 5.

⁴ 2 Sam. vi.

² Cp. § 6. ci.

⁵ Prov. xvii. 19.

³ Cp. notes, § 16. ii. and § 63. lxxii.

⁶ Ex. xv. 3.

⁷ 2 Sam. vi. 2, 18; vii. 25, 26.

the name of the Lord of Hosts, that dwelleth between the Cherubim ;' and 'he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of Hosts!' This Psalm is the solemn inauguration of this new and great Name, thus wonderfully introduced for the first time.

It was the organisation of David which gave the Israelites an army capable of coping with their ancient enemies in a fortress which had defied all previous efforts. This very organisation had seemed to Samuel fraught with danger to the ancient Theocracy, but the truer insight of David and the deep religious feeling of the nation found in it only a new revelation of the majesty of Jehovah, who from this time forward 'went¹ forth with their armies' under the new title, JEHOVAH GOD OF SABAOTH.

At the words 'Thou God of Jacob'² the first part of the Psalm comes to a full close. The abrupt transition between the two parts has been explained, by supposing the first six verses to have been sung as a prelude by the congregation, as they wound up the ascent to Zion. The difference however is one, not only of form but of matter, and the historical treatment aimed at in the present work compels us to consider them as two separate psalms, of which the inauguration psalm is the earlier. In later times the two, as referring equally to Zion, were naturally united in a single psalm.

The inauguration Psalm gains greatly in significance by standing alone; the employment of the new name of Jehovah, God of Hosts, would in fact lose half its meaning, if the name of Jehovah in the well-known sense had occurred before in the same Psalm. Historically it was the earlier of the two parts: in it Zion is about to receive the Ark and to become the Holy City, while in the later Psalm³ the same Zion is mentioned in its already well-known character of the Hill of Jehovah and His Holy Place. Again, the didactic character of the later Psalm leads to the conclusion that it was written to supply a lesson, which would not be needed until the increasing fame and grandeur of the Holy Place had attracted thither crowds of worshippers,—the lesson namely, that the only true worshipper is he

¹ § 119. xliv. 9.

² v. 6.

³ § 4. xxiv. 1-6.

The King's Library

§ 4.]

BOOK THE FIRST.

15

who is pure in heart and life, and that such, and such only, will receive the blessing of God.

I. A choir of priests approaching the gates claim admission for the Ark.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; 7
be ye lift up, ye doors of old,
that the King of Glory may come in !

Warders reply from within.

Who then is the King of Glory ? 8

Choir of priests.

It is Jehovah, strong and mighty,
Jehovah, the mighty in battle.

II. Choir of Priests repeat their summons.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, 9
be ye lift up, ye doors of old,
that the King of Glory may come in !

Warders reply from within.

Who is He, the King of Glory ? 10

Choir of Priests.

It is JEHOVAH, LORD OF HOSTS,
He is the King of Glory.

Ver. 1. The old doors are to become young, and to rise to a greater height in honour of the new King. Cp. Prov. xvii. 19. The height of the gates expressed the dignity of the King for whom they were prepared. Hence the Eastern custom of building gates of extraordinary height.

§ 4. Ps. xxiv. 1—6.

IN Psalm xxiv. 1—9 the Psalmist strives to set before the people the high ideal of the true Israel¹.

¹ Cp. introduction to § 5. xv.

I. *God is Creator of the world: who may come into His presence?*

The earth is Jehovah's and all that therein is, 1
the compass of the world and they that dwell therein,
for He hath founded it upon the seas, 2
and holdeth it fast upon the floods.—
Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? 3
who shall stand in His Holy Place?

II. *Answer.*

Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart, 4
and that hath not lift up his mind unto vanity,
nor sworn so as to deceive his neighbour:
he shall receive blessing from Jehovah, 5
and righteousness from the God of his health;
these are they that seek Him, 6
that seek Thy face, O God of Jacob!

Ver. 1. *compass.* The Hebrews regarded the earth as a plane surrounded by the ocean stream. Prov. viii. 27, 29.

Ver. 2. *founded—holdeth.* Water was everywhere beneath the earth, as rivers and springs shewed. The mountains were the pillars that held it in its place. Job xxvi. 11; § 146. cxxxvi. 6; Gen. i. 2, 9, 10.

Ver. 5. *righteousness, i.e.* the fruits of righteousness.
health (i.e. prosperity), and blessing are often coupled with right and righteousness, as the reward bestowed upon the righteous by God.

Absolute right or righteousness exists eternally in God. In the man who approaches Him and apprehends His righteousness in the grasp of a living faith, it becomes an active principle, rich in fruit, and so is often used in the Psalms as identical with health or blessing. Cp. § 25. xxiii. 3; § 69. xxii. 32, and especially § 123. cxxxii. 9 and 17; also § 115. lxvii. 2; Ps. xlii. 11 (Bible Version); Isaiah lviii. 8; Jer. xxx. 17.

The sentiment, if not the actual language of the whole Psalm, is repeated in Isaiah xxxiii. 15—16: at a time when the Holy City was in peril from Sennacherib.

He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly;
he that despiseth the gain of oppressions;
that shaketh his hands from the holding of bribes,
that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood,
and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil;
he shall dwell on high,
his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks;
bread shall be given him,
his waters shall be sure.

Ver. 6. *Jacob, i.e.* the poetical name of the people of Israel. Cp. § 119. xliv. 5, and note.

§ 5. PSALM XV.

THE establishment of the Ark at Jerusalem threw a sanctity over the entire city. The devout began to flock to it as to the centre of the national worship: the worldly and superstitious, from a growing belief in its inviolability. This belief was in David's time doubtless mingled with much lawful reverence, inseparable from the associations of the spot: nor was it till the darker times following the retreat of the Assyrians, who seemed to the Israelites to have shrunk away awe-struck at the majesty of the Holy City¹, that the belief in the inviolability of Sion began to degenerate into the fanaticism which drew down the severe denunciations of the prophet Jeremiah². Still David at the very first saw in the belief something far different from the religious conceptions which he wished to see growing up in the city of God, and here by this second description of the true worshipper³ he impressively rebukes this and all other superstitious feelings to which the new worship may have given rise. As it is not only in David's time that the symbol has been placed above the thing signified and a superstitious efficacy attached to the externals of worship, this Psalm has an equal value for every age, in keeping before the mind the great lesson that sanctity of life and truth of heart are the absolute essentials of a spiritual religion.

The true worshipper.

Jehovah! who shall dwell beside Thy tabernacle?	1
who shall rest upon Thy holy hill?	
Even he that walketh uprightly and doeth the thing which is right,	2
and speaketh the truth from his heart:	
he that keepeth not slander upon his tongue,	3
nor doeth evil to his friend,	
nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour;	
he that scorneth every vile thing,	4
but honoureth them that fear Jehovah;	
who hath sworn to his own hurt, and changeth not;	5

¹ See § 36. xlviii. 4, and introduction to Assyrian Psalms §§ 35—38.

² Jer. vii. 3—8; cp. Amos iii. 9—12; Jer. vi. 8.

³ Cp. § 4. xxiv. 1—6.

he that hath not given his money upon usury, 6
 nor taken reward against the innocent:
 whoso doeth these things shall never fall. 7

Ver. 5. *sworn—and changeth not; i. e.* who abides by his oath, even when he perceives that he has sworn to his own hurt.

§ 6. PSALM CI.

THE inauguration of Sion as the seat of David¹ and the dwelling of Jehovah is commemorated in this Psalm, the true type of all inaugural Odes. Much had been done, much remained to do. The immediate task was to order the king's household², including in an Eastern monarchy the government of the army and the administration of justice³. At such a moment a prince of less noble ambition would have been dazzled with the splendour of victory or have sunk into the pride and sensuality of Eastern royalty—a weaker one would have recoiled from the difficulties before him. David, on the contrary, longs at such a crisis for the strength and enlightenment which come from communion with God. He is the vicegerent of the King of kings. From the study of God's ways he learns the secret of His government; he feels that the true governor must be like God; and so he sets an example for all reformers to follow, by aiming first at the reformation of his own heart. No base or ignoble thought must lurk in the soul of the anointed of God. Every base and vile thing, be it slanderer, flatterer, or ungodly man, must be banished from the Holy Place where God's honour dwelleth.

I. *The king, as God's vicegerent, must be pure and true;*

My song shall be of mercy and judgement; 1
 to thee, Jehovah, will I sing,
 Let me give heed to the way of godliness,—O when wilt 2
 Thou come unto me?—
 let me walk in my house with a perfect heart! 3

¹ vv. 8, 11.

² v. 10.

³ vv. 6—9.

I will set no unholy thing before mine eyes; 4
 I hate the sin of unfaithfulness, it shall not cleave unto me !
 a heart of guile shall depart from me, 5
 I will not know a wicked thing !

II. *so also the king's house and the king's court.*

Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour—him will I destroy; 6
 whoso hath a high look and a proud heart,—I will not 7
 suffer him ;
 mine eyes look unto such as are faithful in the land, that 8
 they may dwell with me ;
 whoso leadeth a godly life, he shall be my servant : 9
 there shall no deceitful person dwell in my house, 10
 he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight :
 every morning I will pluck up all the ungodly from the 11
 land,
 that I may root out all wicked doers from the city of
 Jehovah !

Ver. 1. *mercy; i. e.* Thy mercy. He selects the two attributes of God as King which His vicegerent is most bound to imitate.

Ver. 2. The cry, *When wilt Thou come unto me?* is at the same time a prayer and, though parenthetical, expresses the main thought of the psalm. The coming of God here prayed for is not outward or visible by an outward sign, as in 2 Sam. vi. 7, but rather God's spiritual presence, as in Gen. xx. 3 and Exodus xx. 18—24. David's continual hope and prayer is, that Jehovah may come and abide with him always: and this abiding presence he can only win by striving to be like Him.

Ver. 6. *slandereth—proud.* Compare Prov. vi. 17, 18; xxi. 4; xxviii. 25. Pride is coupled with slander, because both have their root in self-seeking.

Ver. 11. *every morning.* The morning was the time for administering justice. Cp. Jer. xxi. 12, 'execute judgement in the morning;' and 2 Sam. xv. 2.

§§ 7—9. PSALMS XXIX. XIX. VIII.

PSALMS OF NATURE.

THE Hebrews were distinguished from all other nations of antiquity by one great characteristic, their belief in the unseen. This is especially marked in their lyric poetry, which, while it yield to no

other in the brilliancy of its pictures and the fire of its language, rises to the height of inspiration and takes its place in the Holy Writings from the fulness and reality of its belief in the presence of God. Even as lyric poems, the Psalms of Nature are unsurpassed; nowhere do we find greater elevation of thought or greater perfection of structure¹. The greatness, the glory, the everlasting order of Nature are reflected on the soul of a poet, already filled with an abiding sense of God's presence. Old truths are illustrated and confirmed² by the contemplation of Nature; or the poet's soul is stirred to new³ thought by some great and fearful phenomenon. The Hebrew Psalmist can never forget the living God in nature; he apprehends and paints nature as full of God and revealing God to him in every motion; and it is only through God that it becomes living and intelligible to him. Hence to the Hebrew poet, songs of Nature rise in reality to be Hymns of Praise.

§ 7. PSALM XXIX.

THE PRAISE OF JEHOVAH IN THE STORM.

THERE is nothing in all creation which so brings the omnipotence of the God of heaven home to the Hebrews, nothing which makes the connexion between heaven and earth and the influence of heaven upon earth so real, as a thunder-storm. The clouds are His chariot; the lightning is the fire of His nostrils; if He do but touch the hills, they shall smoke. The rarity and violence of such storms in Palestine⁴ gave them a significance elsewhere unknown. Hence it is under this image that they picture to themselves God's most tremendous judgments⁵. 'Behold the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with His anger; His lips are full of indignation and His tongue is 'a devouring fire; and His breath is as an overflowing stream.' * * * 'And the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard, and shall 'show the lighting down of His arm with the indignation of His anger, 'and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering and tempest 'and hailstones.'

¹ Cp. note on page 22.

² Cp. Pss. viii. xix.

³ Cp. Ps. xxix.

⁴ Cp. Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, c. ii. p. 124.

⁵ Cp. Isa. xxx. 27-30.

I. *The Psalmist calleth on the angels round the throne to bow down and worship Jehovah, when He shall reveal Himself in thunder and lightning to the world.*

Give unto Jehovah, ye sons of God, 1
 give unto Jehovah glory and strength!
 give unto Jehovah the honour due unto His name, 2
 worship Jehovah in holy apparel!

II.

HARK! JEHOVAH is above the waters, 3
 the God of Glory thundered,
 Jehovah above the waterfloods;
 HARK! JEHOVAH is in power, 4
 HARK! JEHOVAH is in majesty.

HARK! JEHOVAH—He breaketh the cedar-trees, 5
 how Jehovah breaketh in pieces the cedars of Lebanon,
 and maketh them to skip like calves, 6
 Lebanon also and Sirion like young buffaloes;
 HARK! JEHOVAH how He flasheth forth flames of fire!

HARK! JEHOVAH shaketh the wilderness, 7
 Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh;
 HARK! JEHOVAH maketh the hinds to calve, 8
 and strippeth the forests of their leaves;
 while in His palace everything shouteth, 'GLORY!'

III.

Jehovah hath His seat above the mighty flood; 9
 yea, Jehovah shall sit as a King for ever!
 Jehovah will give strength unto His people, 10
 Jehovah shall give His people the blessing of peace!

Ver. 1. *Sons of God, i. e.* celestial Beings spoken of in Scripture as forming the court in Heaven. Cp. Job i. 6, xxxviii. 7.

Ver. 3. *Hark! Jehovah*, literally the 'voice of Jehovah,' or Jehovah revealed in thunder.

Ver. 6. *Sirion* is the Sidonian name of Hermon. Cp. Deut. iii. 9.

Ver. 8. *palace, i. e.* in heaven. Cp. § 1. xi. 4; § 12. xviii. 6; Micah i. 2.

shouteth glory. Cp. Isaiah vi. 3, 'And the Seraphim cried one with another and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah, God of Hosts; His glory the fulness of the earth.'

NOTE.

The closest examination of this Psalm only reveals more strikingly the perfection of its structure. It has the regular form of the pæan or triumphal ode and is divided into three members :

I. The Prelude, in which the Psalmist calls on the angels round the throne to do homage to Jehovah, when He shall reveal Himself in thunder and lightning to the world.

II. The Body of the Psalm, in three equal strophes, each of five lines, marking the successive stages of the storm ; 1st, its distant gathering ; the low faint muttering of the thunder in the far off unapproachable realms of sky ; 2nd, its sudden advance, seizing the mountains and crushing the cedars ; then, in the 3rd, it passes on and spreads over the plain and dies away ; thus making the whole universe to tremble from sky to earth, from the hills of Lebanon in the north to the wilderness of Kadesh in the south. These strophes contain the revelations of Jehovah to man, issued like royal mandates in peals of thunder.

Nay more, each of these strophes is itself divided into five lines, and each line begins with a fresh burst of the storm.

In strophe 1 we have in the first line the distant muttering of the thunder ; the peal becomes louder and clearer in lines 2 and 3 ; and in lines 4 and 5 rings with ever-increasing and more continuous roll, the voice of Jehovah, through the world.

In strophe 2 the storm falls with its crashing power on the cedars ; then with bounding speed upon the mountains themselves, making them to skip like buffaloes ; and it ends with the flashing of the forked lightning.

In strophe 3 we have the same structure ; the sound of Jehovah making the wilderness to tremble, sweeping in jubilant might from Lebanon to Kadesh ; bowing the very beasts in the throes of labour, while the hurricane strips the forest of its leaves, till it is hushed and lost in the diapason, which through all the world telleth of His glory.

III. The Conclusion, that men should learn the protecting love of Jehovah ; who though He sitteth a King above the mighty flood, shall give strength unto His people and the blessing of peace.

§ 8. PSALM XIX.

THE PRAISE OF JEHOVAH IN THE FIRMAMENT AND IN THE LAW.

IT is no longer storm and tempest that move the poet's soul, but the calm bright sky which sheds its splendour every day over Palestine. Such a sky, unchangeable in its everlasting radiance, is the

most eloquent witness to the glory of God the Creator, and draws the mind of man with silent but irresistible power from the visible to the invisible, from itself to the whole universe.

In this Psalm—in the form at least in which it has come down to us—we find in striking contrast two distinctive modes of Hebrew feeling; the older feeling, which saw God revealed in Nature, the later, which saw God revealed in the Law. Of the former, which belongs to the time of David, these Psalms of Nature are the grandest specimens; of the latter, which did not arise till the time of Josiah, the 119th Psalm is the most elaborate expression. The placing¹ of these two ideas side by side is not without its beauty and its interest; but is due to the later period when the nation looked rather to the study of the Law than to the world around them for the revelation of God.

I. *The glory of God in Creation.*

The heavens declare the glory of God,	1
the firmament sheweth His handywork,	
day unto day uttereth speech,	2
night unto night revealeth knowledge;	
they have neither speech nor language,	3
neither are their voices heard,	
but their sound is gone forth through all lands,	4
and their words into the ends of the world,	
where the sun hath a tabernacle to take his rest.	

II.

And he steppeth like a bridegroom from his chamber,	5
and boundeth like a giant to run his course;	
from the uttermost part of the heaven he hath his rising,	6
and his circuit even unto the end of it again;	
and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.	

* * * * *

Ver. 5. *tabernacle.* The sun has pitched his tent in the heavens, at the end of the world, the western horizon, in which after his daily journey he sinks to rest.

Ver. 6. The train of thought in vv. 1—6 is manifestly incomplete; the idea of ver. 2 is not

¹ Cp. § 130, Preface.

III. *The glory of God in His law.*

The law of Jehovah is perfect and refresheth the soul, 7
the testimony of Jehovah is true and giveth wisdom
unto the simple;
the statutes of Jehovah are right and rejoice the heart, 8
the commandment of Jehovah is pure and giveth light
unto the eyes;
the fear of Jehovah is clean and endureth for ever, 9
the judgments of Jehovah are true and righteous altogether,
more to be desired are they than gold, yea than much fine gold, 10
sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

IV.

Moreover by them is Thy servant taught: 11
and in keeping of them there is great reward!
who can tell how oft he offendeth?— 12
O cleanse Thou me from the sin that I wist not of!
keep Thy servant also from presumptuous men, lest they 13
get dominion over me!
then shall I be innocent and free from great transgression!

carried out; we are not told, as we should expect after ver. 6, how the night teaches the glory of God. We see from § 9. viii. 3, 'The moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained,' that the night also teaches His glory, differently perhaps but not less powerfully; which suggests the idea, that some such beautiful words are lost after ver. 6 of this Psalm. The construction of the strophe leads us to the same conclusion, that four lines are lost, which would suffice for the expression of the missing sense.

Ver. 7. The 3rd and 4th strophes are separated from the first part of the psalm by the strongest divergence both of sentiment and language. The changed rhythm and the artificial structure of the 2nd part contrast strongly with the simpler and more powerful language of the first; while feelings characteristic of the closing period of the monarchy appear in the expression of the Psalmist's fears, that with the ever-growing anxiety to satisfy the minutiae of a written Law his own unconscious sins against these prohibitions would also increase, and that he may be led away by the seductive or constraining influence of presumptuous men—the name given in later Psalms to such as inclined to heathenism.

Ver. 8. *giveth light unto the eyes, i. e.* of the understanding. It means in § 27. xiii. 3 and Ezra ix. 8, giving light to eyes growing dim from sorrow. But here the Psalmist is speaking of the teaching and commandments of Jehovah.

Ver. 13. *presumptuous men.* It was no easy task in those times to keep free from the seduction or constraint of the great men who inclined to heathenism. Hence the frequent

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in Thy sight,

Jehovah, my rock and my redeemer! 15

prayers of later Psalmists for strength; § 48. liv. 1—3; § 41. cxli. 4; they felt that it was only by escaping this temptation they could avoid great transgression; and that unconscious breaches of the law were more pardonable than a conscious leaning towards the ways of the heathen. This fear of falling away into heathenish ways increased still more, when the newly built Jerusalem was actually under the dominion of the heathen, § 92. cxxv. 3.

Ver. 15. *Jehovah—redeemer*. This address to Jehovah is taken from § 12. xviii. 2; a fact, which suggests the idea that the later Psalmist found that psalm in the same series with the Davidic psalm, to which he appended the conclusion contained in vv. 7—15.

§ 9. PSALM VIII.

THE PRAISE OF JEHOVAH IN THE CREATION OF MAN.

THE great spiritual truth contained in the ¹first page of Scripture, that God made man in his own image, flashes forth in this Psalm in true lyric grandeur, a ray of light across the dark mystery of creation.

This truth has been worthily expressed in some of the noblest poems ²in our language, in which the proof of our heavenly origin is sought in the unsoiled purity of our infancy, in its simplicity and obedience, in the consciousness that its life is bounded by love, in its unruffled serenity and the fulness of its joy. But it is here that we find the first and grandest expression of this truth,—the outcome of that Hebrew inspiration, which in an age of darkness seized upon the sublimest spiritual truths and revealed them to mankind. We learn here what is nature and what is law; what is degeneracy and breach of law; and that God has ordained for Himself in the unconscious praise of their Creator from the mouths of babes and sucklings a stronghold against the noisy clamour of apostate men, who rebel against the divine order and lay upon God the blame of their own aberration from His order.

To David, whose shepherd life on the lofty hill-sides of Judah had brought him into constant communion with God in His creation, there

¹ Gen. i. 26, 27.

² By H. Vaughan in the *Retreat* and by Wordsworth. See note on ver. 2.

was nothing unnatural in the transition from the thought of man's divine origin to the contemplation of God's other works. He could think without shrinking of the contrast between his own weakness and the glories of a starlit night, between himself, the poor shepherd, 'the atom amidst the infinity of nature' and the multitudinous brilliance of the firmament. Nay more, the sense of God's omnipotence, which was nurtured by this life in the wilderness, seemed only to enhance the sense of human dignity¹, which was so striking a part of David's character.

The solitude of David's early life brought him face to face with God in two distinct ways. He realised God's omnipotence in creation with the imagination of a poet: he realised no less fully in the depths of his consciousness the living connection of man with God. This living connection with God is the source of human dignity; hence David, though a sense of the physical impotence of man was daily forced upon him by the stupendous phenomena which environed him, yet felt in the presence of God within his own soul a source of spiritual power which raised him above all material creation and affiliated him to the Divine.

I. *Testimony of infancy to the glory of God.*

Jehovah, our Lord !	I
how excellent is Thy name in all the earth,	
Thou, whose glory is high above the heavens !	
Out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings	2
hast Thou ordained a stronghold for Thyself, because	
of Thine enemies,	
that thou mightest still the enemy and the revengeful man !	

II. *The physical weakness and spiritual dignity of man.*

When I consider the heavens, the work of Thy fingers,	3
the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained ;	
what is man that Thou art mindful of him,	4
and the son of man that Thou visitest him,	

¹ § 2. vii. 5; § 12. xviii. 43—48; § 20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 17; § 14. iii. 3; § 15. iv. 2.

and madest him a little lower than God, 5
 and crownedst him with glory and honour ;
 and madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy
 hands, 6
 and didst put all things in subjection under his feet,
 all sheep and oxen, 7
 yea, even the wild beasts of the field,
 the fowls of the air and the fishes of the sea, 8
 and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas?

III.

Jehovah, our Lord ! 9
 how excellent is Thy name in all the earth !

Ver. 2. By H. Vaughan in the *Retreat*.

Happy those early days, when I
 shined in my Angel-infancy !
 before I understood this place
 appointed for my second race,
 or taught my soul to fancy aught
 but a white, celestial thought ;
 when yet I had not walked above
 a mile or two from my first Love,
 and looking back, at that short space
 could see a glimpse of His bright face ;
 when on some gilded cloud or flower
 my gazing soul could dwell an hour,
 and in these weaker glories spy
 some shadows of eternity ;
 before I taught my tongue to wound
 my conscience with a sinful sound,
 or had the black art to dispense
 a several sin to every sense,
 but felt through all this fleshly dress
 bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back
 and tread again that ancient track !
 that I might once more reach that plain
 where first I left my glorious train ;
 from whence the enlightened spirit sees
 that shady city of Palm-trees !
 but ah ! my soul with too much stay
 is drunk, and staggers in the way :—

some men a forward motion love,
 but I by backward steps would move;
 and when this dust falls to the urn,
 in that state I came, return.

And by Wordsworth, in his great *Ode on intimations of Immortality from recollections of Early Childhood*.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
 the soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 hath had elsewhere its setting
 and cometh from afar;
 not in entire forgetfulness
 and not in utter nakedness,
 but trailing clouds of glory do we come
 from God, who is our home:
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 upon the growing boy,
 but he beholds the light and whence it flows,
 he sees it in his joy;
 the youth who daily from the East
 must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 and by the vision splendid
 is on his way attended;
 at length the man perceives it die away
 and fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
 yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 and even with something of a mother's mind
 and no unworthy aim,
 the homely nurse doth all she can
 to make her foster-child, her inmate, Man,
 forget the glories he hath known
 and that imperial palace whence he came.
 Behold the child among his new-born blisses
 a six years darling of a pigmy size!
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies
 fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 with light upon him from his father's eyes!
 See at his feet some little plan or chart,
 some fragment of his dream of human life,
 shaped by himself with newly learned art;
 a wedding or a festival,
 a mourning or a funeral;
 and this hath now his heart,
 and unto this he frames his song:
 then will he fit his tongue
 to dialogues of business, love or strife;
 but it will not be long

e'er this be thrown aside,
 and with new joy and pride
 the little actor cons another part;
 filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'
 with all the persons down to palsied Age,
 that life brings with her in her equipage;
 as if his whole vocation
 were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 thy soul's immensity;
 thou best philosopher who yet dost keep
 thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
 that deaf and silent read'st the eternal deep,
 haunted for ever by the eternal Mind,—
 Mighty prophet! Seer blest!
 on whom those truths do rest
 which we are toiling all our lives to find;
 thou, over whom thy immortality
 broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
 a presence which is not to be put by;
 thou little child, yet glorious in the might
 of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 the years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
 Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
 and custom lie upon thee with a weight
 heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

§§ 10—12. PSALMS CX. LX. XVIII.

DAVID'S GREAT WARS AGAINST THE HEATHEN.

THESE Psalms shew the fruits which were produced in the hour of peril by the fearless faith which had been the distinguishing mark of David's rule. He had seen what Saul had not seen, that the secret of the nation's strength lay in the consciousness that they were the people of Jehovah. As long as 'every man did what was right in his own eyes,' the Divine election of the nation might be a tradition of the past or a possibility in the future, but it was in no true sense a reality in the present. It was an idea that might inspire a few hero-spirits: the call of Deborah and Barak might make Zebulun and Naphthali 'willingly offer themselves:' and the war-cry which identified the sword

of Gideon with the sword of Jehovah might 'strengthen the hands of three hundred to make the host of the East run and cry and flee though they lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude.' So 'the spirit of Jehovah had come upon Jephthah,' and had 'moved Samson at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol,' but wild and lawless characters like these could never be the instructors of a nation. A man must first weed his own soul of evil before he can 'pluck up all the ungodly from the land,' or 'root out all evildoers from the city of Jehovah.' It was this lack of moral discipline that turned Saul, on whom the Spirit of God had once come with such force, that he 'prophesied among the prophets,' into 'the mistake, the failure, the ruin' he became. It was David who saw that it was not what a man does which exalts him but what he is, that it was not occasional acts of prowess but the heartfelt love of righteousness that raises a man to be the Vicegerent of Jehovah: it was David who first caught the full meaning of the great utterance of Samuel that it was a nobler task to satisfy the spirit of the Law by obedience of the life, than the letter by hecatombs of hostile spoil. David's own moral exaltation and still more the spirit of fearless justice in which he ruled had its effect upon the nation at large. The Theocracy became real to them in a sense in which it had never been before. They saw that an organized system which was based upon religion and built up of justice, was more truly the embodiment of the Divine Government than the fitful inspiration of the Judges. Thus they won the might that comes from right: they felt that a war in defence of this new organization was most truly a holy war, and that, if David was the head of it, he was not only the king but the high priest of his people. Animated by this feeling they forgot all the old 'divisions and searchings of heart,' and flocked round the standard of their king in such numbers and with such a spirit that they crushed the greatest coalition that ever threatened to destroy their religion and their nation.

§ 10. PSALM CX.

THE king is setting forth to war after prayer and sacrifice; the Prophet promises the help of Jehovah, whom in a bold figure he

describes as driving to the battle in His chariot of war, with the king, as His earthly vicegerent, seated at His side¹. Fired by this thought, the imagination of the poet pictures the fight and the victory. He sees the king grasping the sacred sceptre and asserting his supremacy over his foes². He sees the troops, ready to go in jeopardy of their lives for their God and for their king, glittering in their armour, like victims decked for the sacrifice, brilliant and countless as dew-drops of the summer morn³.

Here the Psalmist pauses in his song of triumph, to begin a second strophe, as he had begun the first, with a fresh promise from Jehovah, that the golden age of the Patriarchs is to be realised once more, and that David is to be the priest as well as the king of the nation⁴.

Then he returns to the thought of the impending battle, and shews that the promise was not to be barren of result; that the king's new inviolability would be vindicated on the battle-field; that the God, whose priest he was, would fight beside him and would assert His supremacy over the kings of the Heathen by a judgment which would cover the field with the slain⁵.

I. *The Psalmist relateth God's promise of help, the presages of victory, and the mustering of the troops:*

Jehovah saith unto my lord; **Sit thou on my right hand,** 1
until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

Jehovah shall send thee the sceptre of power out of Sion; 2
—be thou ruler in the midst among thine enemies!—

thy people are a free-will offering in thy day of battle; 3
in holy array, as dew-drops from the womb of the morning,
thou hast the bands of thy warriors.

Ver. 1. *Jehovah.* For a similar picture of God's leadership of the Israelite host, cp. § 119. xliv. 10; 2 Sam. v. 24, and Deut. ix. 3; Judg. iv. 14; Isa. lii. 12, &c.

Ver. 3. *In holy array—warriors.* Literally, 'in holy array, from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth.' Youth is used in the collective sense of 'youthful warriors.' There are two prominent ideas in the metaphor of the dew, (1) its numberless drops, (2) its refreshing influence. The king need have no anxiety about the insufficiency of his force: the troops, so far from dwindling away or being scattered from him, will take their stand in numbers on the morning of the battle, armed and eager for the fight; a sight as refreshing to his eyes as dew-drops to the parched ground.

¹ vv. 1, 5.

² v. 2.

³ v. 3.

⁴ v. 4.

⁵ vv. 5, 6.

II. *he appealeth to God's declaration of the sacredness of the king's office; then passeth to the description of the battle-field,*

Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent : 4

thou art a priest for ever
after the order of Melchizedek !

The Lord upon thy right hand 5

smiteth in sunder kings in the day of His wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen ; the field is full of the slain ;

He smiteth heads in sunder over a wide country :

III. *and the pursuit.*

he shall drink of the brook in the way,
therefore shall he lift up his head.

Ver. 4. The transition is, 'Thou who hast been a warrior art now a priest as well.' For the military character of the Hebrew priesthood, see Note. The union of priesthood and kingship in David was more complete than in any other sovereign of Judah. At the election of Saul the two offices were entirely distinct : and Saul's attempted usurpation of the priestly functions was severely rebuked and punished, 1 Sam. xiii. 9. This possibly was not without effect in causing the massacre of the priests at Nob ; certainly after the massacre the hopes of the priesthood were centred in David, as their protector and future king. Cp. 1 Sam. xxiii. 6, 9 ; 1 Chron. xii. 27. After this David was recognised as the head of the priesthood, offered sacrifices, 2 Sam. vi. 14—18, and delivered the priestly benediction. So also Solomon, 2 Chron. vi. 3. Though the offices were never subsequently separated in the popular mind, there was occasionally strong antagonism between them, as in the case of Uzziah. See *Biblical Dictionary*, articles 'David' and 'Priest.'

For ever, an unlimited time of which the prophet does not see or wish to see the end ; cp. the common wish 'May the king live for ever.' 1 Kings i. 31, &c. Cp. also, § 22. xxi. 4 ; § 23. xlv. 3 ; § 49. lxi. 7 ; Prov. xxix. 14, &c. *order, i. e. manner.* Thou art a priest-king as Melchizedek was.

Ver. 6. *smiteth heads in sunder over a wide country.* The Psalmist thus describes the appalling appearance of the field after the utter destruction of the kings, the signs of which are seen throughout the whole course of the pursuit. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 13.

Ver. 7. *he*, that is, 'the king;' the change from *thy*, ver. 5, to *he* is significant ; such transitions from the second to the third person are characteristic of the Hebrew manner of conquering emotion at the close of a poem ; cp. § 21. xx. 9.

drink brook. The king is not to lose the fruits of victory by thirst or weariness under the Eastern sun : his head shall not droop, 'for the brook which he passes on the borders shall sustain him as he drives his foe far beyond the limits of the land ;' for the need, compare how David longed in the heat for the water of the well of Bethlehem (2 Sam. xxiii. 15) ; how Jonathan and the people were 'faint and distressed' in the pursuit from Michmash (1 Sam. xiv. 24, 29, 30, 31) ; how Gideon was 'faint yet pursuing' (Judges viii. 4) ; and how the people had murmured of old on account of the terrible thirst in the wilderness (Ex. xv. 22), till they too were relieved by the sustaining brook of Massah (Ex. xvii. 6). This last short strophe depicts as it were the calm after the storm, when the Psalmist sees clearly in faith the battle ended and the good irresistibly triumphant.

NOTE ON THE MILITARY CHARACTER OF THE
HEBREW PRIESTHOOD.

THE main difficulty in the 110th Psalm lies in perceiving the connexion of the 4th verse with the rest of the Psalm. The clue to this difficulty will be found in the intimate association of the Hebrew priesthood with the national wars. Hence it comes that in this battle-hymn not only the kingly, but the priestly character of David is brought out.

Whereas the modern idea of priesthood is essentially peaceful, the Hebrew priesthood, from the peculiar circumstances of the early history of the nation, was impressed with a military character. 'The whole nation' as has been well said, 'was at once a nation of soldiers and a nation of priests¹.' The mission of the Hebrews was not to maintain their faith in a country already acquired, but to win a home for the religion of Jehovah. This could only be achieved by the forcible dispossession of the existing occupants, and on this object all the forces of the nation were concentrated. 'That zeal for God should have manifested itself chiefly in the priesthood and that they should not have hesitated to draw the sword is readily accounted for by the fact that in them the ideal of the nation culminated; they were in every sense its representatives².' Thus in the wilderness the congregation formed an encampment³ when they rested: when they moved, their morning prayer was for the 'scattering of their enemies⁴,' in the middle went the Ark; around it marched the Levites⁵, their thighs girt with the sword⁶, the appropriate emblem of those who had earned their title to the priesthood by ready zeal in taking vengeance⁷ on the enemies of Jehovah. In war, the trumpet⁸ of the priest gave the alarm, a sign that Israel should be 'remembered before the Lord his God, and should be saved from his enemies.' Thus at their first siege, the sound of the priests' trumpets⁹ was regarded as Jehovah's summons to surrender. Then, as in succeeding¹⁰ times, the presence of the priest on the battle-field assured the troops of victory and symbolized the

¹ Perowne *On Psalms* ii. p. 256.

⁴ Ib. x. 35.

⁷ Numb. xxv. 7, 13; Deut. xxxiii. 9.

⁹ Josh. vi. 16.

² Ibid.

⁵ Ib. ii. 17.

⁸ Numb. x. 8, 9.

¹⁰ 1 Sam. iv. 5; 2 Chron. xiii. 12-15.

³ Numb. ii. 2.

⁶ Ex. xxxii. 27.

Divine sanction of the campaign. Often the priests not only blew the trumpets, offered the necessary sacrifice¹ and addressed the troops², but fought³ in the ranks of the army themselves.

In the monarchy, the priests played an important part in winning David his throne. Saul's massacre of the priests at Nob⁴ eventually led to the enrolment of the whole priestly tribe as supporters of David; Abiathar⁵ fled to David at once with the sacred ephod and the oracular breastplate, and remained with him during his wanderings⁶; afterwards the Levites with the Aaronites under the chief priest Jehoiada 'came to Hebron in armed bands to turn the kingdom of Saul to him,' Zadok, then a 'young man, mighty of valour,' came to his aid with 'twenty and two captains of his father's house'.⁷ Thus the priests were knit to David and became the mainstay of his wars. Benaiah, the chief priest's son, stands out as captain of his bodyguard⁸.

In David's own case the fact of his being a 'man of war' and a 'shedder of blood',⁹ though it prevented him from building the Temple, was no bar to his receiving the rights and performing the duties of a priest. The early records supplied another example of one not of Levitical origin being acknowledged as a priest of the most High God. Melchizedek, 'the king of righteousness,' who had declared the divine sanction on Abram's warfare¹⁰, seemed the only fit type of this second priest-king, whose shoulders were decked with the priestly cape¹¹ as the champion of righteousness at home¹² and of the religion of Jehovah in the field.

In this Psalm the sanction of the prophet is given to the priesthood of the king. Throughout it breathes the spirit of Nathan, whose words¹³ inspired the nation for all time with a new and deeper consciousness of God's presence with His people. The occasion for such a trumpet-tongued summons to war may well be sought in one of David's great crusades against the heathen, when by the hands of his invincible captain he reduced Philistia and Moab, smote Edom¹⁴ and Syria in the valley of salt, and held his fearful assize in the ruins of the city of Moloch¹⁵.

¹ §§ 21, 22. xxi, xxii; 1 Sam. xiii. 9, 13.

² Deut. xx. 2-4.

³ See Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 2nd Series, pp. 408, 409, to which most of these references are due.

⁴ 1 Sam. xxii. 19.

⁵ 1 Sam. xxii. 20; xxiii. 6, 9.

⁶ 1 Kings ii. 26.

⁷ 1 Chron. xii. 26-28.

⁸ 1 Chron. xxvii. 5.

⁹ 1 Chron. xxii. 8. See however 2 Sam. viii. 6.

¹⁰ Gen. xiv. 20.

¹¹ 2 Sam. vi. 14.

¹² § 6. ci. 11.

¹³ § 16. ii.

¹⁴ § 11. lx. note (2).

¹⁵ 2 Sam. viii. 1-14; x; xii. 26-31. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, pp. 97-104.

As this Psalm in its historical bearing is the glorification of the kingdom of David as God's Anointed, it will be obvious to any one, who will trace the Jewish idea of the Messiah¹ through the Prophets, that it would be especially quoted afterwards as the Psalm connecting the reign of David with that of his greater successor.

§ 11. PSALM LX. 6—8 (CVIII. 7—10).

THE 60th Psalm is given in its entirety in § 125. The shape in which it has come down to us is one of many indications of the living interest which the Hebrews took in the history² of their nation. Old promises were employed in the depression of later times either to sustain the national faith or, as here, to form the text of pathetic appeals to God, by contrasting the state of the nation in its decline with the glorious promises of the Davidian epoch.

The greater part of the Psalm is evidently due to the period of the Dispersion. The most striking passage, however, which forms its central³ portion, and which is also quoted in another Psalm⁴, is no less evidently due to the time of David. The hopes contained in this portion of the Psalm correspond as fitly with the circumstances of David's time, as the despair in the rest of it with the feelings of the Dispersion. In a curious historical notice, which has in the Bible been prefixed as the superscription⁵, the Psalm is referred to a time of extreme national peril, when David was in sore perplexity. The kingdom was threatened on all sides. While⁶ the king was campaign-

¹ § 63. note on Messianic Expectation.

² Composite Psalms. We find more than one instance of Psalms put together by later Psalmists from fragments of earlier Psalms. This very fragment of Psalm lx. 6—10, which, considered historically, belongs to David's Psalms, is joined by a later Psalmist to vv. 8—12 of the 57th (§ 52), and the two fragments, thus joined, form the 108th (§ 143) of the Authorised Version. So also § 24. xxvii. See note there and App. A 2 for other instances.

³ vv. 6—10.

⁴ § 143. cviii.

⁵ The superscription. A Psalm of David. When he strove with Aram of the two rivers [the Syrians of Mesopotamia] and with Aram of Zobah; when Joab returned and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt twelve thousand.

See Appendix B on Superscriptions.

⁶ Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 3—16.

ing in the north against the Syrians, the Edomites had risen in rebellion in the south; and he was so hard pressed that he knew not if an army could be spared to go against them.

In his perplexity he did not give way to panic, but went to enquire of Jehovah, and was comforted by the prophetic utterance which is enshrined in this fragment.

A divine oracle, promising extension of the empire.

God spake in His sanctuary,—let me rejoice thereat,—	6
I will divide Shechem,	
and mete out the valley of Succoth!	
Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine.	7
Ephraim also is the defence of My head,	
Judah is My sceptre!	
As for Moab, it is My washpot,	8
upon Edom will I cast out My shoe:	
over Philistia will I triumph!	

Ver. 6. *Let me rejoice.* These words are spoken by the Psalmist.

Shechem and *Succoth*, as ancient towns on either side of Jordan, stand for the whole of Canaan, which God will *mete out* for Himself, so that no enemy can take it.

Vv. 7, 8. *Gilead* and *Manasseh* are *Mine*: *Ephraim* is *My* helmet; *Judah* is *My* sceptre—but as for *My* enemies, *Moab* shall be *My* washpot, *Edom* shall acknowledge Me conqueror, and *Philistia* shall bewail her defeat.

Ver. 8. The ignominious vassalage of Moab and Edom is depicted under the image (1) of the *washpot*, in which the conqueror returning in triumph washed off the sweat of battle, and (2) of the ground on which [some say, the slave to whom] he flung his sandals. *Over Philistia will I triumph.* So it runs in the later version of this oracle, which is incorporated in the 108th Psalm. In the earlier version, contained in the 60th, it is, ‘Cry aloud because of Me, Philistia,’ *i. e.* probably ‘wail aloud.’ But the meaning of both expressions is the same. See § 125, notes.

§ 12. PSALM XVIII.

THIS, the longest and noblest of all David’s Psalms, was, as we learn from its conclusion, sung in the last years of prosperity which crowned his life, when the surrounding nations had become his tributaries and distant nations hastened to do him homage. Thus it is a

fervent outpouring of gratitude, not for a single deliverance, but for all the deliverances of his chequered life.

The form in which this thanksgiving is cast is essentially characteristic. David loved to dwell upon the phenomena of the natural world, not merely for their own beauty or grandeur, but because they were revelations of the goodness and omnipotence of God. The sun by day¹, the moon by night, the innocence of childhood, the high calling of man², are appointed witnesses to the beneficent love of the Creator to His creatures; storm and thunder attest His personal interposition in the world, nay, His very presence on the earth³. As David had described the actual storm to pourtray the omnipotence of God, so here an imaginary tempest is the vehicle which he employs to convey to himself and to others the lessons of his eventful life from its rise amidst the sheepfolds to its close amidst the glories of a prosperous reign. He dwells upon his history in the consciousness that his had been no ordinary life: that as king of the nation which was appointed to be the bearer of God's true religion to the world, he could claim and had enjoyed His special protection. The unfolding of a page in the history of God's kingdom in the world, had depended on the preservation and prosperity of his life, and thus the powers of death and hell had not prevailed against it; nay more, the descent of the Almighty in wrath to deliver him was in his eyes a solemn vindication of the divine order against the futile opposition of man.

It is this moral purpose of the coming of Jehovah to judgment which gives its grandeur to the sublime picture of earthquake and tempest.

Nor is the structure of the Psalm inferior to its subject. Composed in all probability for some great festival, it has all the regularity of structure which such an occasion would demand, and begins, as might be expected, with an exordium of unusual solemnity⁴. The key-note there struck is the special protection of God: this protection, in its relation to the king, gives the real connection to the varying and apparently unconnected strophes which form the body of the Psalm⁵.

¹ § 8. xix; § 9. viii.
⁴ vv, 1, 2.

² § 9. viii.

³ § 7 Ps. xxix.
⁵ vv, 3-46.

The king, overwhelmed by a sea of trouble and sinking to the very gates of hell, cries to Jehovah. God hears from His palace on high and descends to rescue His beloved servant with all the artillery of heaven¹.

From God, the giver of strength and victory, the Psalmist passes to man the receiver. The experience of his life has taught him that the bestowal of God's gifts is neither capricious nor absolute. There is a necessary connection between human holiness and divine favour. The man who is striving for more perfect justice, for greater purity, finds within and without fresh revelations day by day of the attributes and mercy of God. The wicked, finding God as much opposed to them as they are to Him, are perpetually thwarted by the arrangements of His providence. So indissoluble is the connection between human holiness and divine favour. God was true to David because David had striven to be true to Him, and to walk before Him with clean hands and a pure heart².

Therefore it was that God had given him strength to drive his enemies before him³; and thus the Psalm returns at its close to the note of praise with which it began⁴.

I. *The Psalmist praiseth God his deliverer;*

I love thee with all my heart, O Jehovah, my strength! 1
 Jehovah, Thou art my rock and my defence,
 Thou art my saviour and redeemer,
 Thou art my God and rock in whom I trust,
 my shield and the horn of my health,
 my fortress and refuge, Thou art my helper, 2
 who helpst me from wrong!
 I will call upon Jehovah, which is worthy to be praised;
 so shall I be safe from mine enemies!

II. *who hath rescued him from all the perils of his life;*

The billows had surrounded me, 3
 the floods of ungodliness made me afraid,

¹ v. 19.

² v. 30.

³ vv. 39, 49.

⁴ vv. 47—51.

the chains of hell had encompassed me, 4
the net of death had fallen upon me :
in my trouble I cry unto Jehovah, 5
and complain aloud to my God :
He heareth my cry from His palace, 6
my complaint entereth even into His ears ;
and the earth trembleth and quaketh, 7
and the pillars of heaven shake,
yea, they tottered—because He was wroth !
there went up a smoke from His nostrils, 8
and a consuming fire out of His mouth,
a blast of burning coals.

III.

He bowed the heavens also and came down, 9
—clouds and darkness under His feet—;
He rode upon a cherub and did fly, 10
He rode upon the wings of the wind ;
He maketh darkness to be His covering, 11
His pavilion round about Him,
—dark waters and thick clouds—;
at the brightness of His presence, His thick clouds passed away, 12
—hailstones and coals of fire—;
Jehovah also thundereth from heaven, 13
and the Highest giveth forth His voice,
—hailstones and coals of fire !

IV.

He sent forth His arrows and scattered them, 14
He hurled forth His lightning and discomfited them ; 15

Ver. 7. *pillars*. The heaven was represented by the Hebrews as resting on the hills as its foundation, which were hence called the pillars of heaven. Cp. Job xxvi. 11, 'The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof.'

Ver. 10. *cherub*. The cherubim formed the moving throne of God. Cp. Ezek. x. 1, 'Behold in the firmament, which was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared as it were a sapphire stone as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.'

Ver. 12. *hailstones*. Hail was rare in Palestine and so regarded with greater awe. Cp. § 7. xxix. Introduction, and Joshua x. 11.

then were there seen the depths of the sea,
 and the foundations of the earth were laid bare,
 at Thy chiding, O Jehovah,
 at the blast of the breath of Thy nostrils!
 He putteth down His hand from on high and taketh me up, 16
 and draweth me out of many waters;
 He delivereth me from my cruel enemy, 17
 from them that hate me, for they be too strong for me:
 they fell upon me in the day of my trouble; 18
 but then Jehovah was my stay,
 He brought me forth into a place of liberty, 19
 yea, He bringeth me forth because He loveth me.

V. for according to the character of every man, so doth God reveal Himself unto him;

Jehovah rewardeth me after my righteous dealing, 20
 according to the cleanness of my hands doth He recompense me,
 because I have kept the way of Jehovah, 21
 and have not forsaken my God, as the wicked doth;
 for I have an eye unto all His laws, 22
 and I cast not His commandments from me:
 I was also uncorrupt before Him 23
 and kept myself from mine iniquity,
 and so Jehovah rewarded me after my righteous dealing 24
 according to the cleanness of my hands in His sight.

VI.

To the holy Thou shewest Thyself holy, 25
 and upright towards the upright man;

Ver. 19. a place of liberty is opposed to the narrow abyss in which the Psalmist had lain. Cp. § 57. xxxi. 9, 'Thou hast not delivered me into the hand of the enemy—Thou hast set my feet in a large room;' and Job xxxvi. 16, 'He would have removed thee out of a strait into a broad place, where there is no straitness.'

Ver. 23. mine iniquity, i. e. the sin which most easily besets me.

Ver. 25. shewest Thyself. That God's revelation of Himself in the soul and in the world depends upon the character of man, and that man's conception of God rises or falls with his moral life, is a decree of eternal justice. The converse of this, that our moral nature rises or falls with our conception of God is equally true: for 'man must needs assimilate himself to what he worships.' This is well expressed by Professor Kingsley: 'It makes him at

to the pure Thou shewest Thyself pure, 26
 and to the froward as full of frowardness :
 yea, Thou helpest them that are bowed down, 27
 and bringest down the high looks of the proud ;
 Thou also makest my candle to shine : 28
 Jehovah is my God: He maketh my darkness to be light!
 for in Thee I scatter hosts of men, 29
 and with the help of my God I leap over their walls ;
 as for God, His way is upright, 30
 the word of Jehovah is tried in the fire.
 He is a shield to all them that trust in Him !

VII. *and giveth David strength to subdue his enemies and make the nations tributary.*

For who is God save Jehovah, 31
 who is a rock except our God ?
 He is the God that hath girded me with strength, 32
 and cleared my way before me,
 He made my feet like harts' feet, 33
 and setteth me upon the high places of the land ;
 He traineth mine hands to war, 34
 so that mine arms should bend even a bow of steel ;
 Thou hast given me the shield of Thy salvation, 35
 Thy right hand upholdeth me,
 Thy graciousness doth lift me up !

VIII.

Thou hast made room enough under me for me to go, 36
 that my footsteps slip not ;
 I follow after mine enemies and overtake them, 37
 and turn not again till I have destroyed them,

last like the false God whom he is preaching (for every man at last copies the God in whom he believes), dark and deceiving, proud and cruel.'

Ver. 30. *is tried* and standeth the test.

Ver. 32. *cleared my way, i.e.* let nothing hinder me in marching against mine enemies.

Ver. 33. *high places of the land.* The armies of the Israelites consisted entirely of infantry at this time, and the possession of the heights secured the possession of the country.

Ver. 35. *graciousness, i.e.* Thou stoopest to make me great.

yea, until I have smitten them that they cannot stand, 38
 but fall under my feet!
 for Thou girdest me with strength unto the battle, 39
 Thou bowest down mine enemies under me;
 Thou madest my foes to turn their backs before me, 40
 as for them that hate me, I utterly destroy them.

IX.

They cry aloud, but there is none to help them, 41
 yea, even to Jehovah, but He doth not hear;
 so that I beat them small as the dust of the earth, 42
 and stamp them under foot as the mire of the streets!
 Thou deliverest me from the strivings of the people, 43
 Thou preservest me to be head over the nations;
 a people whom I knew not do me service; 44
 at the hearing of the ear, they are obedient unto me, 45
 even the sons of strangers do me homage,
 yea, the sons of strangers fade away, 46
 they come forth trembling from their strongholds!

X. *The Psalmist returneth to the praise of God, his deliverer.*

Long live Jehovah! blessed be my rock, 47
 and praised be the God of my salvation!
 even the God that saw that I was avenged, 48
 and subdued the nations under me;
 it is Thou who deliverest me from my enemies, 49
 yea, and settest me up above mine adversaries,
 and riddest me from the violent man!
 therefore do I praise Thee, O Jehovah, among the nations, 50
 and play and sing praise unto Thy name!
 great prosperity giveth He unto His king, 51
 and sheweth loving-kindness to His Anointed,
 unto David and his seed for ever!

Ver. 49. *the violent man, i. e. the kings of the heathen.*

§ 13. PSALM XXXII.

THE occasion of this Psalm is undoubtedly to be sought in the history of Bathsheba.

Secrecy¹ shrouded the king's sin for a time and prevented it from producing any affect in the world without. Within himself it bore its natural fruits, anguish of soul and body², until his slumbering conscience was at length aroused by the apologue of the prophet. The peace and cheerfulness³ which followed his confession of guilt and the prophet's assurance of divine pardon, are known to every one from the history, but the previous effects of the sin upon the Psalmist's heart find no record but here⁴.

This Psalm from its penitential character is often classed with the 51st⁵, from which in many important features it is entirely different. The 51st was composed during the very bitterness of a struggle in the soul, abounds in personal experience, and is a confession of sin still unforgiven. Here the conflict is over, and the personal experience is introduced solely to impart to the world the eternal truths impressed on the Psalmist's soul: he has learnt that it is the privilege of man, as a being endowed with reason, to live in communion with God⁶, and that there is no happiness for man without openness before God, and truthful dealing with his own soul.

I. *The Psalmist declareth the blessing of openness before God;*

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, 1
 and whose sin is covered :
 blessed is the man to whom Jehovah imputeth no guilt, 2
 and in whose spirit is no self-deceiving.

II. *quoteth his own experience;*

While I held my tongue, my bones consumed away 3
 through my daily complaining ;
 for Thy hand was heavy upon me day and night, 4
 my moisture became like the drought in summer.

¹ 2 Sam. xxii. 12.⁴ vv. 3 and 4.² vv. 3.⁵ § 75.³ vv. 1, 2, and 6.⁶ v. 10.

I acknowledge my sin unto Thee and hide not my guilt, 5
 I said, 'I will confess my faults to Jehovah,' 6
 and so Thou forgavest the wickedness of my sin.

III. *exhorteth all to turn to God,*

For this let every good man pray to Thee when thou mayest 7
 be found;
 for though the waterfloods be high,
 they shall not come nigh him.
 THOU art my hiding-place, Thou shalt preserve me from trouble, 8
 Thou shalt encompass me about with songs of deliverance.
 I will teach thee, saith Jehovah, and shew thee the way 9
 wherein thou shouldest go,
 and I will guide thee with Mine eye.

IV. *and not to withstand Him.*

Be not ye like to horse and mule, which have no under- 10
 standing!
 his mouth must be held with bit and bridle,
 who doth not approach Thee willingly.
 Great plagues hath the ungodly, 11
 but whoso putteth his trust in Jehovah mercy embraceth
 him on every side.
 Be glad, O ye righteous, and rejoice in Jehovah, 12
 be joyful all ye that are true of heart.

Ver. 6. *and Thou forgavest, i. e.* Thou didst wash out the guilt of my sin.

§ 14. PSALM III.

THIS Psalm was written by David in an hour of peril and persecu-
 tion¹ after the ark had been long established in Jerusalem². It
 expresses his feelings at the time of Absalom's rebellion and possibly
 was sung on the very morning³ that followed his flight from the city.

¹ v. 6.

² v. 4.

³ v. 5.

It is marked by many of the noblest features of his character,—the sense of communion with God and calm confidence in His protection¹, —the tender love which forbids him to mention his son's name when it must be coupled with reproach,—and the royal generosity which at the thought of the horrors of a civil war merges every consideration of self in a prayer for the wellbeing of the people of God².

I. *The Psalmist, in the hour of peril and despair,*

Jehovah! how are they increased that trouble me! I
 many are they that rise up against me,
 many there be that say of my soul, 2
 'there is no help for him in God.'

II. *comforteth himself with the recollection of the former favours of God,*

But Thou, Jehovah, art a shield about me, 3
 Thou art my glory and the lifter up of my head!
 I call upon Jehovah with my voice, 4
 and He heareth me out of His holy hill.

III. *renewed in the past night-season,*

I laid me down and slept, 5
 I am risen again, for Jehovah sustaineth me:
 I will not be afraid for ten thousands of the people, 6
 that have encamped against me round about.

IV. *and resigning himself to the will of God prayeth for his people.*

Arise then, Jehovah! help me, O my God! 7
 Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone,
 Thou hast broken in pieces the teeth of the ungodly!
 to Jehovah belongeth the victory!
 Thy blessing be upon Thy people!

Ver. 1. *they that trouble me*, i.e. the party in the state who instigated Absalom to rebellion.

Ver. 4. *I call*, expressing a habit [see (*I call*) § 15 iv. 3] in contrast with the special occasion indicated by the tense (*I laid*) in verse 5.

§ 15. PSALM IV.

THIS even-song¹ belongs to the same time, possibly to the same day, as the last Psalm: but was sung in an hour of still greater trial. The king had heard meanwhile of the calumnies which had followed his flight². Like all true and heroic natures, in the hour of peril and unjust persecution he awakes to a consciousness of his strength and integrity.

The grandeur and royal dignity of David's character was largely due to his deep sense of the covenant between God and His Anointed³, and his constant endeavour to act worthily the part of God's vicegerent upon earth. His selection by Jehovah is to him an unanswerable reply to his calumniators and the surest proof of his own uprightness⁴. This trait of David's character especially endeared him to his subjects, and was preserved in two distinct narratives, wherein his sense of the reverence due to the Anointed of Jehovah is shewn by his twice sparing the life of his persecutor Saul⁵. Thus it is that in the attacks upon himself all feeling for his own personal wrongs is lost in the sense of the sin and irreverence they imply towards Jehovah⁶. The absence of any prayer or wish for revenge becomes more striking when we consider the feelings of the age in which the Psalms were written⁷.

I. *The Psalmist appealeth to God;*

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness; I
 Thou who didst set me at liberty when I was in trouble,
 have mercy upon me and hearken unto my prayer.

II. *urgeth his slanderers to repent;*

O ye sons of men! how long will ye blaspheme mine honour? 2
 how long will ye love vanity,
 and seek lying?

Ver. 1. *of my righteousness, i. e. who upholdest my right and maintainest my righteousness.*

¹ v. 9.² v. 2.³ See particularly § 12. xviii. 19—30.⁴ v. 3.⁵ 1 Sam. xxiv. 6; xxvi. 11.⁶ *vv.* 4 and 5.⁷ Ex. xxi. 24—27. Matt. v. 38. § 70. xxxv. 26; § 73. lxix. 22—28.

know then that Jehovah hath chosen the man that is true to Him, 3
 Jehovah heareth when I call upon Him!
 stand in awe and sin not! 4
 commune with your heart within your chamber and be still!
 offer the sacrifice that is due, 5
 and turn ye in trust to Jehovah!

III. *and prayeth for a ray of help to cheer his friends: for himself he trusteth in God.*

There be many that say, 'Oh! that we could see some good!' 6
 lift up, O Jehovah, the light of Thy countenance upon us! 7
 Thou hast put gladness in my heart, 8
 more than when corn and wine increased:
 I lay me down in peace and straightway rest! 9
 for Thou, Jehovah, alone
 wilt make me to dwell in safety!

Ver. 4. *stand in awe—be still, i.e.* tremble at the thought of opposing God's elect: reflect on the folly of your endeavours, and still your slanderous tongues.

Ver. 5. *offer the sacrifice that is due, i.e.* rightly due for the sin of blaspheming God and the king, in the hope that He will accept your sin-offering.

Ver. 6. *see some good, i.e.* many of my adherents in despair say 'Would we could see some manifestation of divine favour!'

Ver. 8. *corn and wine.* Great interest was taken by the kings in the tillage of the land. At this time the 'hunger, weariness and thirst' of his army in the desert naturally turned David's thoughts into this channel. See 2 Sam. xvii. 27—29.

§ 16. PSALM II.

'I WILL be his father and he shall be My son¹,' or, as it is echoed in the Psalms of the Restoration, 'I have found David My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed him;...he shall cry unto Me, 'Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation!' And I will make him My firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth².'

Such was the great promise uttered by Nathan to David, embodying the vital principle of the Hebrew monarchy. From it we learn

¹ 1 Chron. xvii. 9. 2 Sam. vii. 13.

² § 124. lxxxix. 21, 27, 28.

how great a change of feeling had taken place in the life-time of a single generation. Samuel had shuddered at the danger of the Theocracy, when the throne of Jehovah was assigned to a human usurper; but the greatness of David's spirit transfigured the whole idea of Monarchy. Saul had paid little attention to the fact that he was a 'Captain of the inheritance of Jehovah,' whereas the mainspring of David's actions was the sense of his relation to God. David may thus be said to have created the essential idea of the Israelite polity, that the King was only a regent in God's name, the deputy of Jehovah, and the chosen instrument of His will. So far from holding his office as an usurper he looked upon himself as the constituted witness of the dominion of Jehovah; and because he recognized the law, not of his own pleasure but of God, as the rule of his kingdom, he became closely associated with Nathan¹, the great prophet of his age, and received from him the promise of the blessing which should rest first on Solomon, and through him on all true kings of Israel.

It is sad to think that the next important interference of the prophetic order after Nathan had secured the throne to Solomon, was the symbolic action of the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite,—an action fraught with such momentous consequences to the future history of the Monarchy—when he 'rent the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and gave ten tribes to Jeroboam².' A comparison of the utterances of Nathan embodied in this Psalm with the words of Ahijah affords a striking instance of the true moral basis on which the promises of the Old Testament rest. If we possessed the biography of Solomon by Nathan³ we might have a touching record of the prophet pleading with the apostate king, and recalling his former promises in words like those in which a later psalmist appeals to the rulers of his time, 'I have said, Ye are gods⁴, and ye are all children of the most Highest, but ye shall die like men, and fall all the sort of you, ye princes⁵.'

¹ Cp. § 10. cx. 4, note.

² 1 Kings xi. 31.

³ 2 Chron. ix. 29.

⁴ So the term 'gods' is applied to 'judges' (Ex. xxi. 6): and bringing a case to trial before a judge is called 'enquiring of God' (Exod. xviii. 15). Cp. also (ib. ver. 19), 'Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God'—implying a reservation of the more important causes for the decision of the direct representative of God. (Cp. *Bibl. Dict.* 'Judges.') Perhaps too Judges v. 8 may be thus explained. Cp. § 53. lviii, and introduction.

⁵ § 83. lxxxii. 6, 7.

Though the 'king¹ of peace' failed to bring true peace and prosperity² to the nation, yet the idea which lay at the root of the promise lived on in the hearts of the prophets and was the stay that supported them in the darkest hours of the Captivity and the text of the most sublime appeals for a national reformation³.

This Psalm then, being based as it is on the words of Nathan, must be referred historically to the time of the coronation of Solomon. It seems to breathe the calmness of conscious power when menaced by an impending revolution; and on this ground will best suit the perilous times which ensued on David's death. His chosen heir had hardly freed himself from the troubles of a disputed succession before he found the Empire itself menaced by disruption. The subject nations had at times moved uneasily under the law imposed upon them even in David's time: but now there seemed threatenings of a general upheaving. The Edomites and Syrians soon broke out in open rebellion; and it seems not improbable that the other heathen tribes had long cherished a hope that the glory of the Empire would depart with David, and had meditated a general insurrection while the power was not yet firmly grasped by the youthful hands of Solomon. But the king is still inspired with David's spirit, and though he cannot refer, like David, to a long series of deliverances⁴ as the ground of his trust in Jehovah, yet he can appeal to the solemn promise of God's fatherly help⁵ which was given him at his great inauguration. With the words of the prophet still ringing in his ears, he has no thought of his own personal aggrandisement, but aims only at reasserting God's supremacy over the heathen, whose real aim he knows is to set themselves free from the restraints imposed upon them by the law and religion of Jehovah, and to return once more to the unbridled licence of their barbarous rites. Such counsels he feels must share the inevitable fate of all human fighting against God, and with the kindly feeling of a benevolent king⁶ he solemnly counsels them to bow down ere it is too late at the altar of the God whom they have incensed⁷.

¹ Shelômhoh or Solomon. 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

² § 98. cxxii. 7, &c.

³ Cp. § 37. lxxvi. and § 63. lxxii, notes on expectation of a Messiah.

⁴ § 12. xviii. &c.

⁵ *vv.* 6, 7.

⁶ *vv.* 10, 11, 12.

⁷ For an exposition of the historical meaning of this Psalm, cp. Arnold's *Sermons on Interpretation of Scripture*, p. 435.

- I. *The Psalmist expresseth his wonder at the conspiracy and at the vain boast of the revolted nations;*

Why do the nations gather themselves together, 1
 and why do the peoples imagine a vain thing?
 the kings of the earth stand up 2
 and the rulers take counsel together
 against Jehovah and against His anointed—
 ‘let us break their bonds asunder, 3
 ‘and cast away their cords from us!’

II. *God heareth and replieth;*

He that hath His throne in Heaven shall laugh. 4
 the Lord shall have them in derision;
 then shall He speak unto them in His wrath, 5
 and terrify them in His sore displeasure:
 and yet it is I who have anointed My king, 6
 upon My holy hill of Zion.

III. *the king remindeth them of the divine utterance at his coronation,*

Let me tell of the covenant; 7
 Jehovah said unto me: thou art My son,
 this day have I begotten thee!

Ver. 5. *Then shall He* etc. *Now*, while they are plotting, Jehovah looketh down in quiet scorn on them, but *then*, that is, if they attempt actual rebellion, He will overwhelm them with His chastisement. Observe the climax, the *laugh* of security, the *derision* of rising anger, and then the *word* and the *terror* which follows it.

Ver. 6. ‘*I*’ is emphatic: ‘*you* dare to begin a vain war, but *I* have anointed My king over you, and shall support him against you.’ In the rapid wrathful speech, the first part of the contrast is omitted, as being sufficiently implied by the second.

Vv. 7—9. 3rd strophe. The recollection of the solemn ceremony of the anointing leads the poet on to the further description of the prophetic address, which was made to him at the time.

Ver. 7. *this day have I begotten thee*. If any man can become spiritually a new man, much more should a king be born again, at the sacred moment of his election, when all outward power is transferred to him. Then, if he is to be a king indeed, he must realize in his heart the true meaning of his kingship: the conditions of his rule were that he was to act as the vicegerent of Jehovah. This is the *covenant*, the statute mutually ratified by king and people, proclaimed no doubt solemnly at the coronation of Solomon as it had been at that of Saul (1 Sam. x. 25) and of David (2 Sam. v. 3), when the elders of Israel reminded him of the word of the Lord, ‘Thou shalt feed My people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel,’ and ‘king David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.’

desire of Me and I shall give thee the nations for thine inheritance,

and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession,
thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron,
and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

IV. *and adviseth submission.*

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings,

be warned, ye that are judges of the earth,
serve Jehovah with reverence,

and quake before Him with trembling!
take warning, lest He be angry and ye perish;

for His wrath is quickly kindled:

blessed be all they that put their trust in Him.

Ver. 12. *take warning.* The former of these words is plain and means to 'take hold of,' 'cling to,' 'kiss;' for the latter, various readings and various interpretations are given. The Prayer Book Version 'Kiss the son,' *i. e.* 'do homage to the king as the Lord's anointed,' would suit well with ver. 2, 'the rulers take counsel together against Jehovah and against His anointed;' but it is too questionable as a translation to be retained. The word translated 'Son' is not the word used by this Psalmist in v. 7, nor was it in use till a far later period. Some accepting this meaning have consequently referred the Psalm to the Maccabean times. '*Take warning*' is given by Ewald and others, who justify the translation of the LXX. and other ancient versions; but whether the sentence means '*do homage purely*,' '*embrace clearness*' (*i. e.* *take a clear warning*), or '*do homage to Him*,' the general sense is the same; the kings are called on to show submission, *lest Jehovah be angry.* *Jehovah* is the subject of the sentence, '*lest He be angry:*' the mention of any earthly king would be here an anticlimax; the Psalm is continually mounting from the lower to the higher, and the earthly attributes of the king are lost sight of in the sublime thought of the real identity of his rule with that of Jehovah.

§ 17. PSALM CXLIV. 12—15.

THIS fragment forms the second part of a Composite¹ Psalm, of which the former part² belongs to the latest period of Hebrew Psalmody. The simple and forcible description of a time of peace and prosperity, the picture of a people living in the happy contentment

¹ Cp. Appendix A, 2.

² vv. 1—11 § 142.

of pastoral life, under a religion calculated, in wonderful contrast with that of other nations, to further the highest interests of man, can hardly apply so well to any other time of their history as to the end of David's or the beginning of Solomon's reign. The mention of sculptured pillars supporting, like Caryatides, the inner roof of a palace, to indicate the stately beauty of their daughters, and of the nurseries of young trees, to indicate that of their sons, both point to a time when architecture was much thought of and the great works of Solomon were familiar to the people.

The sudden change in the last verse of the Psalm suggests the thought, that the preceding description may have been quoted, after the manner of the Composite Psalms, in a state of things widely different. The exclamation in the 15th verse seems to form a part of the later Psalm and rather to express the longing hope that such prosperity may be their portion, than the triumphant thanksgiving of men in the actual enjoyment of it. The yearning after the prosperity of David's reign and the protection of Jehovah which this prosperity implied, is one of the most striking features of the Psalms of the period of the Return from Captivity.

Prosperity of the land.

Our sons are as plants, that shoot up in their youth,	12
our daughters are as pillars, yea as polished columns	
of a palace,	
our garners are full and plenteous with all manner of store,	13
our sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in	
our fields,	
our cattle are big with young, and no untimely birth,	14
no going forth to war, and no complaining in our streets;—	
happy are the people that are in such a case;	15
yea, blessed are the people, who have Jehovah for their God!	

Vcr. 14. *going forth to war.* Cp. Amos v. 3, alluding to the hardships of conscription.

§§ 18—20.

THE DAVIDIC PSALMS FROM THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

TO the Psalms of the Davidic period are appended three other.
¹ Psalms of David, which though not contained in the Psalter, bring out in a remarkable degree the great features of his character,—his justice, his intense and tender love, and that exalted grandeur, which made him at once the man after God's own heart and the realisation of Israel's brightest hopes.

§ 18. 2 SAM. I. 19—27.

IN the great battle of mount Gilboa Saul and Jonathan perished. The dark fierce jealousy of Saul was now forgotten; and David's passionate love for Jonathan finds free expression in this wild yet tender outburst of grief. It is Saul of the early days whom he speaks of here; Saul the mighty warrior, the Anointed of Jehovah, the delight of his people, the father of his tenderly loved and faithful friend: and Jonathan, the greatest archer of the great archer tribe, the hero of the battle of Michmash, who with his own hand had dislodged the Philistine garrison from their stronghold and inflicted upon them a defeat from which they did not recover till the end of his father's reign². David introduced the 'song³ of the bow' among the men of his own tribe as a tribute to the memory of his fallen friend; and so this elegy handed down from generation to generation by the bowmen of Judah, has been preserved to us, to be enshrined in the hearts of men for ever, as the monument of a pure and faithful friendship.

DAVID'S LAMENT OVER SAUL AND JONATHAN.

I.

The beauty of the forest, O Israel, is slain upon thy heights: 19
how are the mighty fallen!

Ver. 19. *The beauty of the forest*, i.e. the larger kind of gazelle, the name by which Jonathan was known among his comrades.

¹ From 2 Sam. i. 19—27. iii. 33, 34. xxiii. 1—7.
² 1 Sam. xiv. ³ 2 Sam. i. 18 'use of the bow.'

tell it not in Gath, 20
 publish it not in the streets of Askalon,
 lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,
 lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph!

Ye mountains of Gilboa, let no dew nor rain come upon you 21
 and your fields of offerings,
 for there the shield of the mighty is stained,
 the bow of Saul, not anointed with oil!
 from the blood of the slain; from the fat of the mighty 22
 the bow of Jonathan turned not back,
 and the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, 23
 and in their death they were not divided,
 they were swifter than eagles, and stronger than lions:
 ye daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, 24
 who clothed you in scarlet, with delights,
 who put ornaments of gold on your apparel!

II.

How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle, 25
 Jonathan slain upon thy heights!
 I am distressed for thee, Jonathan! my brother! 26
 very pleasant hast thou been to me,
 thy love to me was wonderful, yea, passing the love of
 women.

III.

How are the mighty fallen, 27
 and the weapons of war perished!

Ver. 21. *fields of offerings*, i. e. your fertile slopes, so productive in offerings. *not anointed*, i. e. the holy oil rubbed off in the mire. *not*, i. e. no longer.

Ver. 22. *the mighty*, i. e. the huge giants of Philistia.

Ver. 24. *daughters*, waiting the arrival of the king laden with spoils [*delights*] for them.
 Cp. 1 Sam. xviii. 6 and Judges v. 30.

Ver. 26. *passing*, i. e. surpassing.

Ver. 27. *the weapons of war*, i. e. those by whom the war was waged.

§ 19. 2 SAM. III. 33, 34.

THE noblest side of David's character shews itself in his conduct and feelings towards Saul and the upholders of Saul's dynasty¹. Abner had come to David to Hebron, with 20 chief men of the tribe of Benjamin, to offer him the sovereignty over their tribe and the tribes which had been united with it. He was honourably received and sent away in peace, but Joab, the nephew of David and captain of the host, who was just returned from the pursuit of the enemy, sent messengers after him as though wishing to say something on behalf of the king. Abner returned, and was treacherously slain by Joab and his brother Abishai, in revenge for the death of their brother Asahel². He was buried in Hebron; David himself followed the bier, and lifted up his voice and wept at the grave of Abner; thus bearing witness before assembled Israel that Abner's death had not been, as Joab would have made it appear, the well merited punishment of a villain, but the treacherous murder of an honourable man.

DAVID'S LAMENT OVER ABNER.

Should Abner die as a malefactor dieth?	33
thy hands were not bound,	
nor thy feet put in fetters;	34
as a man falleth before wicked men, so fellest thou!	

§ 20. 2 SAM. XXIII. 1—7.

DAVID was now near his death. He had already charged Solomon³ with his last wishes to keep the covenant with Jehovah, on which his kingship depended. He had assembled the princes of Israel⁴, the captains, the officers and the valiant men, that he might in their presence solemnly charge the new king to complete the Temple, for which he had been allowed to prepare. And now once again he touches his lyre to sum up the experience of his life in one word of prophetic import, true not only for that, but for all time. It is the very voice of Jehovah⁵, breathed into the heart of His servant, and by him

¹ Cp. § 2. vii. and § 15. iv. Introductions.² 2 Sam. ii. 23.³ 1 Kings ii. 1—11.⁴ 1 Chron. xxviii. 1—10; xxix. 22.⁵ *z.* 2.

uttered for the guidance not only of his son, but of all mankind. It is as though the various notes of former Psalms were here gathered up in one grand chord, uniting and blending them all in full and perfect harmony.

DAVID'S LAST WORDS.

So saith David, the son of Jesse, 1
 so saith the man who was raised on high,
 the Anointed of the God of Jacob
 and the sweet Psalmist of Israel:
 the spirit of Jehovah speaketh in me, 2
 and His words are on my tongue;
 the God of Israel hath said, 3
 the rock of Israel hath spoken to me;

I.

If a man ruleth over men justly, ruling in the fear of God,
 it is as when a morning is bright and the sun riseth, 4
 a morning and no clouds;
 after sunshine, after rain the tender grass springeth from the earth.

II.

For is not my house so with God that He made with me 5
 an everlasting covenant,
 ordered in all things and sure?
 for all my salvation and all my desire—
 yea, should He not make it to grow?

III.

But wicked men are all of them as abominable thorns, 6
 that cannot be grasped with the hand:
 and whoso cometh near them is fenced with iron and the 7
 staff of spears;
 and they are forthwith utterly burnt with fire.

Ver. 5. covenant. The covenant between Jehovah and the king, His vicegerent on earth, like all contracts, requires witnesses to its truth and guarantees for its observance. The true prophets are the guarantees and the witnesses, and their words are the evidence upon which this covenant rests. Compare 2 Sam. vii. and § 10. cx.

BOOK II.

*PSALMS OF THE MONARCHY FROM
DAVID TO THE CAPTIVITY.*

BOOK II.

FROM DAVID TO THE CAPTIVITY.

WHEN we pass from the age of David, we pass from growth to decadence, from organization to disruption, from the enthusiasm of a golden age of spiritual elevation to a time of cold materialism or debasing superstition. The whole period from David to Hezekiah is one of degeneracy and decay. Notwithstanding some attempts at reformation, it is probable that the mass of the southern tribes deserted the Temple for the more attractive worship of the High Places. If the people of that time paid but little honour to the material temple, which was already completed, much less could they proceed with the building of that spiritual temple, of which David had laid the foundation. That temple was composed of the noblest utterances of the Hebrew religion; it was destined to attract the devotion of the world for ages after the material temples had passed away, and it required in its builders a purity of heart and a devotion of spirit that was rarely reached except in moments of national enthusiasm. There is no indication of such a national revival till the time of the signal deliverance from the host of Senna-

cherib¹. Before this revival, with the exception of a few Psalms² which are a part of the outcome of the Davidic epoch, the only considerable additions made to the Psalter are personal thanksgivings³ and elegies⁴. There can be no stronger proof of the decay of religious life in the nation at large.

¹ §§ 35—39. xlv. xlviii. lxxvi. lxxv. lxxv.

² §§ 21—25. There are only two, the 27th and 23rd, which are deeply marked with the impress of David's time; these, even in their present shape, are, if not actually his, at least close imitations of his style and thought. The 20th is evidently a Temple hymn, though it breathes much of David's spirit. There remain the 21st and 45th. Ewald suggests the possibility that these may have emanated from the northern kingdom and have been memorials of the brighter interval 'when Jeroboam the son of Joash restored the coast of Israel according to the word of the Lord God of Israel which He spake by the hand of His servant Jonah' (2 Kings xiv. 25—28).

³ §§ 28—30. xxx. xli. lxvi. 12—18. The thanksgiving contained in Jonah ii. should also be classed with this series. For the text of this thanksgiving, see Supplement, (HEBREW LYRICS.)

⁴ §§ 26, 27. vi. xlii. §§ 31—34. xli. lxii. xxxix. xc.

BOOK II. [SECTIONS 21—63.]

FROM DAVID TO THE CAPTIVITY.

§ 21. PSALM XX.

IN this Psalm we have a relic of the ancient Liturgy, an antiphonal¹ Temple hymn, of which the strophes are sung alternately by the assembled congregation and the priest, while the king is offering sacrifice on the eve of a struggle against the formidable cavalry and chariots of the heathen². Such sacrifices were naturally regarded as unusually solemn and important by all nations of antiquity; as, in the case of the Hebrews is shown by the scene at Gilgal, when the king risked the displeasure of the prophet sooner than enter on the battle without the usual prayers and sacrifice³.

This Psalm is a noble embodiment of the deep conviction that right alone is might, that 'there is no restraint⁴ to the Lord to save by many or by few.' Such was the spirit which animated the heroes of Israel; in it lay the secret of their success. These were the words with which Jonathan and his armourbearer had triumphed unaided over a host of foes, and made the thousands of chariots and horsemen in which the Philistines trusted melt away in 'trembling' before the power of Jehovah⁵.

The People

pray for the success of the king in full assurance of victory.

May Jehovah hear thee in the day of trouble;
the name of the God of Jacob defend thee!

I

¹ Cp. §§ 3, 4. xxiv. § 22. xxi. etc. Judg. v. 2, 12, &c.

² 1 Sam. xiii. 12. Cp. v. 3.

³ Cp. ib. xiii. 5; xiv. 15, 'it was a trembling of God,' with vv. 1, 5, 7.

⁴ v. 7.

⁵ 1 Sam. xiv. 6.

send thee help from the sanctuary, 2
 and strengthen thee out of Sion;
 remember all thy offerings, 3
 and accept thy burnt sacrifice;
 grant thee thy heart's desire 4
 and fulfil all thy mind!
 let us rejoice in thy prosperity, 5
 and set up the name of our God on high;
 Jehovah will perform all thy petitions.

The Priest

confirmeth the triumph of their faith.

Now know I that Jehovah helpeth His Anointed, 6
 and will hear him from His holy heaven,
 even with the saving help of His right hand!
 some put their trust in chariots and some in horses, 7
 but our trust is in the name of Jehovah our God:
 they are bowed down and fallen, 8
 but we are risen and stand upright.

The People.

O Jehovah, save the king! 9
 O may He hear us when we cry.

Ver. 2. *send thee help from the sanctuary*, probably in allusion to the presence of the ark or rather of the ephod in battle. Once the ark was moveable (1 Sam. iv. 4), now the help is to come 'out of the sanctuary of Sion.' Cp. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, II. p. 215.

Ver. 5. *thy prosperity*, they see that the sacrifice of ver. 3 is accepted, and at once change their prayer into a thanksgiving for the victory which they feel is certain.

set up, as an ensign. So the Bible Version, 'in the name of our God we will set up our banners.'

Ver. 6. *Now*, because the people are so full of trust in Jehovah, and because the sacrifices have been favourably received. *know I*. The change from the plural to the singular marks the division between the words of the priest and those of the people.

Ver. 7. *chariots* were part of the Ethiopian force, 2 Chron. xiv. 9. So of the Canaanites, Judg. i. 19; iv. 3, 13; Josh. xvii. 16; and occasionally of the Israelites, 1 Kings x. 26, 29; Is. ii. 7.

Ver. 9. *O may He hear us*. The change from the second to the third person is characteristic of the Hebrew manner of conquering emotion and sinking into calmer language at the close of a poem. Cp. § 10. cx. 7.

§ 22. PSALM XXI.

FROM the reign of Solomon onward the people dazzled by the halo of glory which had been thrown over the Monarchy, were ever more and more tempted to forget the Theocracy which underlay it: but the Prophets still remained as witnesses of the original covenant of the kingship, and their constant endeavour was to save the people from sinking into a mere abject submission to an earthly ruler by leading them to remember that in honouring the king they were honouring the Vicegerent of Jehovah, and that it was as such only that they paid him reverence. Thus in this Psalm the Prophet feels it a part of his duty to hallow the natural feelings of loyalty, and to sanctify their joy at the long-continued¹ preservation of the king, the pride and blessing² of their nation.

The occasion of the Psalm is apparently the celebration of some solemn anniversary, such as the birthday³ or accession⁴ of the king. In many points it resembles the last Psalm, and may not improbably have been modelled upon it. It has the same antiphonal form, and is adapted in the same way for Liturgical use. Both are hymns of battle, and there are also many special resemblances in the parts assigned to the Priest and to the People⁵. But the tone is different. This is less devotional; it speaks less of God than of the king. It is also more exultant: the one is like a litany; the other a pæan⁶. The one tells of the eve of an army's actual departure for the scene of war; it reflects the anxious earnest thoughts of those who feel what they have at stake in the contest⁷: the other breathes the joyous confidence of the nation and their scorn for the threats of the foe⁸, when in the peaceful quiet of their homes they⁹ still hope that the terror of their first appearance¹⁰ will drive the foe from the field¹¹, and that they will march forth rather as ministers of offended justice¹² than as combatants to a hard fought field.

¹ *v.* 4.

² *v.* 6.

³ Gen. xl. 20; Job i. 4; Jer. xx. 15; Matt. xiv. 6.

⁴ Hos. vii. 5.

⁵ *vv.* 7, 8, 13; xx. 5, 6, 9.

⁶ *vs.* 1-6; xx. 1-4.

⁷ xx. 1, 2, 9.

⁸ *vs.* 8-12.

⁹ *v.* 7.

¹⁰ *v.* 9.

¹¹ *v.* 12.

¹² *vs.* 9, 10.

The People.

- The king rejoiceth in Thy strength, O Jehovah, 1
 exceeding glad is he of Thy salvation :
 Thou hast given him his heart's desire, 2
 and hast not denied him the request of his lips ;
 yea, Thou forestallest him with choicest blessings, 3
 Thou settest a crown of gold upon his head ;
 he asked life of Thee, and Thou gavest it him, 4
 length of days—even for ever and ever.
- Great is his power, through Thy saving help, 5
 glory and majesty dost Thou lay upon him :
 yea, Thou shalt make him a blessing for ever, 6
 and glad before Thee with delight :
 because the king putteth his trust in Jehovah 7
 through the mercy of the most Highest he shall not miscarry.

*The Priest**addresseth the king.*

- All thine enemies shall feel thy hand ! 8
 thy right hand shall find out them that hate thee ;
 thou shalt make them like a fiery oven when thou appearest ;— 9
 Jehovah shall destroy them in His wrath and the fire
 shall consume them ;—
 their fruit shalt thou root out of the earth, 10
 and their seed from among the children of men.
- Though they intend mischief against thee, 11
 and imagine evil—yet shall they not prevail :

Ver. 1. *salvation, i. e. saving help.* Cp. v. 5.Ver. 6. *Yea, Thou shalt make him a blessing for ever.* Cp. Gen. xii. 2, 'and thou shalt be a blessing.'

Ver. 8. As in Psalm xx., so here it is probable that the first part is a hymn sung during the sacrifice, and that the second part represents the priest's blessing at its favourable acceptance.

Ver. 9. *fiery oven* ; cp. the doom of Sodom. Gen. xix. 28.

for thou shalt put them to flight 12
 when thou makest thy bow ready against the face of them.

The People.

Arise, Jehovah, in Thy strength! 13
 O let us sing and praise Thy power!

§ 23. PSALM XLV.

A ROYAL MARRIAGE PSALM*.

THE special occasion which this psalm seems to celebrate is the entrance of the bridal procession into the palace of the royal bridegroom¹. With the spiritual insight of the Hebrew poets who saw the divine element underlying all human joy and woe, the psalmist cannot look on the king's justice in the judgment-seat², his prowess in the battle³, or even on his personal beauty⁴ and the happiness of the present hour⁵ but as blessings sent from God and as proofs of the king's union with the Divine Ruler of the world.

I. *The Psalmist celebrateth the king's beauty and gracious presence as proofs of God's favour:*

My heart is overflowing with a glorious word; 1
 I speak, and my song is touching the king:
 be my tongue the pen of a ready writer! 2

thou art fairer than the children of men:
 grace is shed over thy lips; 3
therefore doth God bless thee for ever!

II. *and promiseth him success as a warrior because of his justice.*

Gird thee upon thy thigh thy sword of might, 4
 thy glory and thy majesty!

Ver. 3. *therefore, i.e.* it is from the outward graces I conclude that the blessing of God is on thee. The recurrence of this word marks the burden or chorus of the Psalm.

Ver. 4. *gird thee.* There may have been a special ceremony like the binding the sword and spur on a knight at his creation. *glory and majesty, i.e.* deck thyself in thy royal arms for war.

* Or 'A song of loves,' as the Bible-superscription has it, cp. Appendix B.

¹ vv. 10—17.

² vv. 7, 8.

³ vv. 4—6.

⁴ v. 3.

⁵ v. 14.

and in thy majesty ride on 5
 in the name of truth and meekness and of right,
 that thy right hand may teach thee wondrous things!
 thine arrows are very sharp so that nations fall before thee; 6
 they pierce even to the heart of the king's enemies!
 thy throne is God's throne and endureth for ever, 7
 a sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom;
 thou lovest right, and hatest wrong: 8
therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee
with the oil of gladness above thy fellows!

III.

All thy garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; 9
 out of ivory palaces the harp-strings make thee glad!
 kings' daughters are among thy honourable women, 10
 upon thy right hand doth stand the queen,
 in gold of Ophir!

[*The Queen approacheth.*]

Hearken, O daughter, consider, and incline thine ear, 11
 forget all thine own people, and thy father's house;
 and let the king have pleasure in thy beauty, 12
 for he is thy lord, and worship thou him:
 and the daughter of Tyre shall wait on thee with a gift, 13
 yea, and the rich ones of the earth!

Ver. 5. *and in thy majesty.* The Psalmist is still dwelling on the splendour of the king's armour. *in the name of truth.* Cp. the knight's oath—to keep faith, protect the distressed, and maintain right against might. The king is to have no thought of danger, he is to trust in God who will strengthen his right hand to do deeds of prowess, which will be a lesson of God's power even to the doer, so that *nations* will quail before him, while the leaders fall under his *arrows*.

Ver. 7. *God's throne, i.e.* the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah, cp. 1 Chron. xxviii. 5. A repetition of the great promise of Nathan to the house of David. Cp. § 16. ii. 7, 2 Sam. vii. 14.

Ver. 10. *thy honourable women*, or 'loved ones.' The poet pictures the new queen as already there at his right hand, *i.e.* exalted above all in the palace. Cp. Esther ii. 9, 17.

Ver. 13. *the daughter of Tyre, i.e.* the Tyrians, 'the rich' of the next line: they are specially mentioned both on account of their wealth, and also their nearness to the Israelites. The Psalm is referred by many to the northern kingdom, in which case the allusion to Tyre would be specially applicable.

[*The Queen entereth.*]

All glorious cometh the daughter of the king, 14
 her clothing is of wrought gold:
 in raiment of needlework is she led unto the king, 15
 virgins that be her fellows, bear her company,
 and are brought to thee!
 with joy and gladness are they brought, 16
 and enter into the king's palace:
 instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children; 17
 whom thou mayest make princes in all the land.
 I will tell of thy name from one generation to another! 18
therefore shall the people give praise unto thee
world without end!

Ver. 14. *cometh, i. e.* within the palace. This is the meaning of the P. B. translation 'all glorious within.'

Ver. 17. *children.* The future glories of his race shall be greater than the past.

Ver. 18. *therefore* depends on ver. 17.

world without end, the repetition of *for ever and ever* is one of the characteristics of the Psalm, cp. vv. 3, 7, and for the meaning cp. § 10. cx. 4, note.

§ 24. PSALM XXVII.

THIS is one of the Composite Psalms¹. The first part records the triumph of a warrior's faith². What terrors have the perils of war³ for a man who has found his protection in the help of the Almighty? What assurance of a victorious return to his country so

¹ See note on § 11. lx. So the conclusion of § 72. xl. 16—21 is used as an independent Psalm (Ps. lxx.). The whole of § 143. cviii. is formed by a selection of the most beautiful parts of Pss. lvii. and lx. In a similar way § 84. lii. is merely a repetition of Ps. xiv. In the Psalm which occurs in 1 Chron. xvi. 8—36, are combined the whole of § 109. xcvi. and parts of §§ 144, 133. cv. 1—15, cvi. (vv. 1, 45, 46). It appears from this that portions of the Psalms were redistributed according to ideas which were formed of their natural fitness.

In the same manner a compiler may have prefixed the first part of §§ 3, 4. xxiv. (ver. 1—6) to the second part (ver. 7—10) as forming a suitable introduction to it: and similarly the two parts of § 8. xix. may have been combined with a view of adding the praise of God for His law to the original Psalm of praise of Him for His works in nature. See also §§ 116, 30. lxvi. and Appendix A.

² vv. 1—7.

³ v. 3.

strong as the conviction that God will not deny him the one prayer, the sole wish of his life, that he might spend his days in the Sanctuary¹ and rejoice in the service of his God?

The second part² is the prayer of a priest or a prophet apparently in homeless exile, not in peril on the battle-field, but exposed to the persecutions of his apostate countrymen³. The whole spirit of this part of the Psalm is less confident and hopeful; there are notes of deeper pathos, almost of despair, in it, which are quite remote from the feeling of the first part⁴.

While the spirit and imagery of the first part is Davidic, the second breathes a melancholy akin to that of Jeremiah, and probably expresses the sorrows of a martyr to the religious persecutions at the close of the monarchy.

I. *Trust in God maketh the Psalmist fearless in peril;*

Jehovah is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? 1

Jehovah is the strength of my life; of whom then shall
I be afraid?

when the wicked—even mine oppressors and my foes— 2
came upon me to eat up my flesh,
they stumbled and fell!

though an host of men be laid against me, yet is not my heart afraid; 3
though there rise up war against me, yet have I trust withal.

II. *he yearneth for the protection of God's House, which he hopeth soon to revisit in triumph.*

One thing have I desired of Jehovah—this do I long for; 4
even to dwell in the House of Jehovah all the days of my life,
to behold the fair beauty of Jehovah, and to joy in His Temple!

¹ v. 4. The fourth verse in its present form must have been written after the Temple was built; and on this ground the Psalm is here placed in the second period; but the spirit as well as the imagery of the whole of this part is Davidic.

² vv. 8—14.

³ Cp. 3 with vv. 12, 13, 14.

⁴ Cp. vv. 10, 11 and v. 3.

for in the time of trouble He doth hide me in His tabernacle! 5
 yea He sheltereth me in the shelter of His tent and setteth
 me on a rock of stone!
 and now shall He lift up mine head above mine enemies round 6
 about me,
 that I may offer offerings of joy in His tabernacle and sing 7
 and speak praises to Jehovah!

I. *A plaintive cry to God to abide with the Psalmist in his need,*

Hearken unto my voice, O Jehovah, when I cry, 8
 have mercy upon me and hear me:
 my heart hath mused upon Thy word; ~~seek ye~~ *My* face! 9
 Thy face, Jehovah, do I seek!
 O hide not Thou Thy face from me, 10
 nor cast Thy servant away in displeasure!
 Thou hast been my succour; put me not away, 11
 neither forsake me, O God of my salvation!
 when my father and my mother forsake me, 12
 Jehovah taketh me up.

Ver. 5. *tabernacle*. The same metaphor of the sheltering tent is used Is. iv. 6, 'There shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a place of refuge and for a covert from storm and rain.' Is. xxv. 4, 'Thou hast been a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall.' Cp. § 57. xxxi. 22.

For the *rock* (1) as a tower of strength against foes cp. § 12. xviii. 33 (note), and Proverbs xviii. 10: 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe;' while, as Leighton says, 'they who know not this refuge, when any danger arises fly and flutter they know not whither:' (2) as a symbol of a sure foothold, cp. § 72. xl. 2, 'He brought me also out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, and set my feet upon the rock.'

Ver. 9. *Thy word*, i.e. 'Seek ye My face.'

Ver. 12. *when my father...forsake me*. A frequent form of expression in the Prophets. Cp. Is. xlix. 15, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will not I forget thee;' and lxiii. 16, 'Doubtless Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Isaac acknowledge us not.'

II. *and save him from the snares of his persecutors.*

Teach me Thy way, O Jehovah, 13
 and lead me in a plain path,
 because of them that lie in wait for me!
 deliver me not over unto the will of mine adversaries, 14
 for there are false witnesses risen up against me and such
 as breathe out cruelty.

III. *God the only safety in peril.*

Oh—if I had not believed verily to see the goodness of Jehovah 15
 in the land of the living!—
 wait on Jehovah, be strong, and let thine heart take courage, 16
 yea, wait on Jehovah!

Ver. 13. *a plain path, i.e.* free from the dangers of ambuscade. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 9, 'I will cause them to walk in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble;' so § 57. xxxi. 5, 'Draw me out of the net that they have laid privily for me.'

Ver. 15. *Oh...if I had not.* The Bible Version supplies the omitted clause by 'I had fainted.' For similar expressions, cp. Luke xix. 42, 2 Sam. v. 8, 'Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites—!' where the Bible Version supplies 'he shall be chief and captain.'

The abruptness of the transition from ver. 14 to ver. 15 will be explained if the last two verses are attached to the 1st part of the Psalm (ver. 7), to which indeed they seem to form a natural sequel.

§ 25. PSALM XXIII.

THE mention of 'God's House' in this¹, as in the 27th Psalm², requires that both alike, at least in their present shape, should be assigned to a period subsequent to the building of the Temple; but an almost universal feeling has connected this Psalm with the name of the shepherd-king of Israel.

Some have seen in it a thanksgiving for some signal deliverance from the danger of famine, and have even sought the special occasion in David's joy at the loyal help of Barzillai and his friends at Mahanaim, when he was 'weary and weakhanded' in his flight from Absalom, and his 'people were hungry and thirsty in the wilderness³.' But such

¹ v. 6.

² § 24 v. 4.

³ 2 Sam. xvii. 2.

an allusion can only be looked upon as illustrating one side of the subject, and not as exhausting the full meaning of the Psalm.

Whatever may have been the occasion of this Psalm, there is but one recorded life with which we can associate it. It is not easy to disconnect it from the royal shepherd on the lonely hillsides of Judah, when, in the awful presence of Nature¹, he was 'learning the secret or invisible strength²,' and there was 'growing in him a scorn of the strength which lies in bulk, and looks terrible to the eye³—from the persecuted fugitive maintaining his independence against the selfish malice of a tyrant—from the king, whose name lived on in the hearts of his people⁴, as the one prince who had governed them as the Vicegerent of Jehovah, who had looked upon his kingdom, 'not as a prize which he had won, but as a trust committed to him, a trust which he could only administer while he remembered that the Lord was his shepherd, and that he was the shepherd of every Israelite and every man in the earth⁵.'

Should it appear to any that the indescribable tenderness expressed in this Psalm ought to be looked for from some gentler and more leaning spirit than that of David, it must be remembered that the last and highest perfection which the strong nature and indomitable will can reach is that of unselfish devotion and confiding repose in the protecting love of God, in which, as David had learned from the experience of a long life, lay the secret of true strength. And indeed it is no ordinary belief in God's protection which finds expression here; it is the tenderness of a warm and sympathetic heart, which amid the mysterious influences of Nature has realized the loving care of God by carrying out His purposes in caring for His creatures.

I. *The loving care of God.*

Jehovah is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing: 1
He maketh me to lie down in a green pasture, 2
and leadeth me beside the waters of comfort;

Ver. 2. *waters of comfort, i. e. refreshing and restoring water.*

¹ v. 4; cp. § 7. xxix.

³ v. 5; cp. 1 Sam. xvii. 36.

² v. 4.

⁴ Ps. lxxviii. 72; cp. Is. xl. 11.

⁵ Maurice, *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 40—53.

He refresheth my soul, 3
 and bringeth me forth in the paths of righteousness
 for His name's sake.

II.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, 4
 I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me;
 Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.
 Thou preparest a table for me in the face of mine enemies; 5
 Thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup is full;
 Thy lovingkindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, 6
 and I will dwell in the House of Jehovah for ever.

Ver. 3. *righteousness, i. e.* blessedness, the fruit of righteousness. Cp. § 4. xxiv. 5, note. For the intimate connexion of righteousness and happiness, cp. Balaam's prayer, 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his' (Numb. xxiii. 10). *for His name's sake*, that His name may be glorified for this proof of His faithfulness towards His servants.

Ver. 4. *valley of shadow of death*, or 'of trouble,' *i. e.* 'a valley dark and gloomy as death.' For the dread with which the Hebrews regarded desolate scenery, cp. Hos. ii. 14, 15; Is. lxv. 10, where the name 'Achor' means valley of trouble.

Ver. 5. *a table*. God is spoken of as the host who entertains the suppliant in defiance of his pursuers, and makes him the favoured guest and constant inmate of His house. Cp. Job xxxvi. 16. *anointed with oil*, preparatory to a feast; cp. § 41. cxli. 6, note; § 132. civ. 15; Luke vii. 46.

§§ 26, 27. PSALMS VI, XIII.

THE development of the monarchy secured the nation from foreign attack, but produced new internal dangers. The struggles which remained for the faithful were, not against heathen enemies, but against the godless among their own people; hence the Psalms of this period are mostly personal, and depict the alternating joy and woe of individuals rather than of the nation. The 6th and 13th Psalms are records of the victory of faith in depressing sickness and of the triumph of a good conscience over calumny¹. Like Job, the Psalmist is afflicted with sickness, which has prostrated his strength and threatens to cut short his career of service in God's cause by an un-

¹ vi. 9, 10; xiii. 5.

timely death¹, and is at the same time assailed by persecutors who, as birds of prey over the sinking traveller, exult over the progress of his malady, and long for his death², as their crowning triumph in the war of persecution against the godly.

§ 26. PSALM VI.

I. *The Psalmist appealeth to God for deliverance from sickness,*

O Jehovah! rebuke me not in Thine indignation,	I
neither chasten me in Thy displeasure!	
have mercy upon me, Jehovah, for I am weak,	2
heal me, Jehovah, for my bones are vexed,	
my soul also is sore troubled;	3
but Thou, Jehovah,—Oh! how long—?	

II. *ere it be too late:*

Turn Thee, O Jehovah, and deliver my soul,	4
O save me for Thy mercy's sake!	
for in death no man remembereth Thee;	5
and who shall give Thee thanks in the grave?	

III. *in his misery*

I am weary with my groaning,	6
every night wash I my bed,	
and flood my couch with my tears;	
mine eye is dim for very trouble,	7
it is waxed old because of all mine enemies.	

IV. *he is assured that his prayer will be answered.*

Away from me, all ye that work iniquity,	8
for Jehovah hath heard the voice of my weeping;	
Jehovah hath heard my petition,	9
Jehovah will receive my prayer!	
all mine enemies shall be confounded and sore vexed,	10
they shall be turned back and put to shame suddenly.	

Ver. 3. Cp. § 34. xc. 13, 'Turn Thee again, O Jehovah, how long—?'

¹ vi. 5; xiii. 4.

² vi. 7, 8, 10; xiii. 2, 4.

§ 27. PSALM XIII.

I. *Despair.*

How long wilt Thou forget me, Jehovah, for ever, 1
 how long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me?
 how long shall I have trouble in my soul 2
 and be so vexed in my heart all the day long,
 how long shall mine enemy triumph over me?

II. *Prayer.*

O look upon me, and hear me, Jehovah my God! 3
 give light to mine eyes that I sleep not in death,
 lest mine enemy say; 'I have prevailed against him!' 4
 lest they that trouble me rejoice that I be cast down!

III. *Trust.*

But as for me—my trust is in Thy mercy; 5
 let my heart be joyful in Thy help!
 let me sing to Jehovah, because He hath dealt lovingly with me. 6

Ver. 3. 'Lest this sleep into which I am now sinking be changed into the sleep of death.'
 Cp. § 26. vi. 5.

§ 28. PSALM XXX.

THE Psalmist passes now from the despairing elegy¹ to the joyous thanksgiving². In the calm after the storm he sees in quiet retrospect the working of God's ways in all that before had been perplexing to his faith, and in his gratitude he feels his heart warmed towards others who are still in suffering, and pours forth his experience as a lesson of trust to them, and an indication of God's mode of dealing with mankind³.

These Psalms of Thanksgiving were probably accompanied with music and dancing⁴, and were sung at public festivals in the Temple⁵, while the vows which had been made in suffering were discharged by the appropriate offerings.

¹ §§ 26, 27. vi, xiii.

² vv. 6, 7.

³ vv. 4, 5.

⁴ v. 12.

⁵ v. 4.

I. *The Psalmist praiseth God for deliverance, and exhorteth others to praise Him;*

I will magnify Thee, O Jehovah, for Thou hast set me up, 1
and not made my foes to triumph over me!

II.

O Jehovah! my God! 2

I cried unto Thee and Thou hast healed me;
Jehovah! Thou hast brought my soul out of the grave, 3
Thou hast called me into life from among them that are
gone down to the pit;

sing praises unto Jehovah, O ye saints of His, 4
and give thanks unto His holy 'name!

for His wrath endureth but the twinkling of an eye; His favour 5
for a lifetime;

heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

III. *he telleth how his self-confidence was rebuked, but his prayer for life accepted.*

But in my prosperity I said, 6
'I shall never be removed!'

Thou, Jehovah, of Thy goodness hadst made my hill so strong— 7

Thou didst turn Thy face from me,—and I was troubled:
then cried I unto Thee, O Jehovah, 8

and gat me to Jehovah right humbly;—

Ver. 3. *out of the grave*, in Bible Version 'out of hell;' hell is the Biblical expression for the lower world, the abode of the dead: hence often used where we should say 'death,' or 'the grave,' as it is in the Creed, so § 65. xvi. 11, 'Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell;' § 12. xviii. 4, 'The pains of hell came about me:' where it is parallel with 'the snares of death;' § 43. lv. 16, 'Let them go down quick into hell,' *i.e.* alive to the grave. Also § 61. ix. 17, § 118. cxxxix. 7.

Ver. 5. *a night*. Cp. Is. xvii. 14, 'And behold at evening trouble, and before the morning he (the enemy) is not;' and liv. 8.

Ver. 6. *But in my prosperity I said*. Cp. Deut. viii. 12, 14, 17, 'Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, thou say in thy heart, *my* power and the might of mine hand.'

Ver. 7. *troubled*. Cp. § 132. civ. 29, 'When Thou hidest Thy face they are troubled; when Thou takest away their breath they die, and are turned again to the dust.'

Vv. 9—11 are the words of his prayer. *What profit—truth, i.e.* what advantage wilt Thou gain by shedding my blood, for I can render Thee no service in the grave? Cp. Isaiah xxxviii. 18, 19, 'For the grave cannot praise Thee; death cannot celebrate Thee; *** The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.'

‘what profit is there in my blood, in my going down to the grave? 9
 ‘shall the dust give thanks unto Thee, or shall it declare 10
 Thy truth?
 ‘hear, Jehovah, and have mercy upon me, 11
 ‘Jehovah, be Thou my helper!’
 —and Thou hast turned my heaviness into joy, 12
 Thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,
 that my glory may sing unto Thee without ceasing; 13
 O Jehovah, my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.

Ver. 10. *Thy truth*, *i.e.* fidelity, faithfulness to Thy servants who trust in Thee. Cp. § 72. xl. 12, ‘My talk hath been of Thy truth, and Thy salvation.’ § 52. lvii. 11, ‘For the greatness of Thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, and Thy truth unto the clouds;’ where the parallelism shews that *truth* is the same as ‘the greatness of Thy mercy.’

Ver. 12. *my heaviness into joy*. Literally ‘mourning into dancing.’ So in the next line, ‘girded me with gladness’ refers to the dress of the dancer. Cp. Introduction.

Ver. 13. *glory*, or ‘praise;’ that God’s glorious acts of deliverance may be vocal with His praise, that so He may receive the worship due to His name for His faithfulness to His servants. Cp. § 7. xxix. 1, ‘Ascribe unto the Lord worship and strength;’ § 109. xcvi. 7; § 148. cxlix. 5, ‘let the saints be joyful with glory,’ *i.e.* rejoice in glorifying Him.

§ 29. PSALM XLI.

THE 41st is another Psalm of Thanksgiving, but of a somewhat different character from the last. It is marked by more personal feeling and cannot have been intended, at least originally, for a ‘Temple hymn.’ The bitterness of the hatred, which finds vent in it, points to a distracted time when family feuds were rife. The authoritative form of the cry for vengeance¹ seems to indicate that the writer was a man in authority, a prince or the chief of a house. He has been laid low by a deadly sickness, and at the same time has been harassed by the treachery of pretended friends, who have taken advantage of his sickness to spread malicious reports against him². The Psalmist’s soul revolts at the baseness of their conduct. His generous nature scorns the verdict of the world which stamps as blessed the man who succeeds in raising himself on the ruin of the unfortunate, and appeals

¹ v. 10.

² Cp. § 26, 27. vi, xiii. Introd.

to the experience of his own life to shew that generosity is not unrewarded and that sympathy for the sick and suffering brings with it an indefeasible blessing. It is to this that he attributes God's favour as shewn in his marvellous recovery¹.

I. *The blessing that attends sympathy for the suffering is shewn from the Psalmist's deliverance,*

Blessed is he that considereth the poor and needy! 1
 Jehovah delivereth him in the day of trouble.
 Jehovah preserveth him and keepeth him alive, that he may be 2
 blessed upon earth;
 Thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies!
 Jehovah upholdeth him when he lieth sick upon his bed, 3
 Thou hast changed his bed of sickness into health.

II. *for when he appealed to God against the treacherous cruelty of his enemies*

As for me—I said: 'Jehovah, be merciful unto me! 4
 'heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee!
 'mine enemies speak evil of me; 5
 '“when will he die, and his name perish?”
 'and if he come to see me, his heart deviseth evil; 6
 'he conceiveth mischief within himself, and when he cometh
 forth he telleth it.

III. *and their malignant joy at his suffering,*

'All mine enemies whisper together against me, 7
 'even against me do they imagine evil:
 '“Evil is poured out upon him, 8
 '“and from the bed whereon he lieth, he shall rise up no more.”

Ver. 1. *poor and needy, i. e.* the sick and suffering. For this meaning of the word *poor*, as equivalent to 'in misery,' cp. in § 72. xl. ver. 20 with vv. 2, 15, § 63. lxix. 30.

Vv. 1—3. The Psalmist passes from the general blessing on sympathy for the suffering to the special blessing which he feels has attended his sympathy with others in misfortune.

Ver. 6. *come to see me, i. e.* to visit him on his bed of sickness. He singles out one of his enemies as specially employed on this treacherous mission: cp. ver. 9.

Ver. 8. *evil is poured out upon him, i. e.* an evil death as the fate of evil deeds. The Psalmist quotes here the words of evil which they are said to whisper (ver. 7).

¹ vv. 1—4 in connexion with v. 12.

‘yea, even mine own familiar friend, whom I trusted, who did 9
 also eat of my bread,
 ‘hath lifted up his heel against me!

IV. *his prayer was accepted.*

‘But be Thou merciful unto me, O Jehovah, and raise me up, 10
 ‘and I shall requite them;
 ‘by this I know Thou favourest me, 11
 ‘that mine enemy doth not triumph over me.’
 and in mine innocency Thou didst hold me fast, 12
 and didst set me before Thy face for ever.

Ver. 9. *lifted up his heel*, a frequent metaphor. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 15, ‘waxed fat and kicked,’ and 1 Sam. ii. 29.

Ver. 12. The connexion is, ‘I said, Jehovah, be merciful to me,’ and ‘Thou (didst hear my prayer, and) didst hold me fast in my innocency;’ all which intervenes between ver. 4 and ver. 12 is parenthetical, being the words of the Psalmist’s prayer which was thus favourably received.

The Bible Version has a 13th verse: ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel world without end. Amen.’ But this is merely the general Doxology which closes the first smaller collection of the Hebrew Psalter (i–xli), and has no special reference to this particular Psalm. Cp. other Doxologies: § 63. lxxii. 18, 19 (and 20 in A.V.); § 124. lxxxix. 50; § 133. cvi. 46. See Appendix A on the arrangement of the Psalter.

§ 30. PSALM LXVI. 12--18.

THE 66th Psalm is one of the Composite Psalms¹, and consists of two parts entirely distinct in character and subject.

The first part plainly celebrates the second great exodus of the Israelites, the return from the Assyrian captivity², and was designed for a national thanksgiving.

The second part, which is given here, celebrates the deliverance of an individual³, and was intended⁴ to be sung in the Temple during the offering of the sacrifices which had been vowed in the time of need.

I. *The Psalmist in a prelude to a sacrifice of thanksgiving,*

I will go into Thine house with burnt offerings, 12
 and will pay Thee my vows,

¹ See § 116 and § 24, note on Composite Psalms; and Appendix A.

² *vv.* 5, 10, 11.

³ Cp. esp. *vv.* 16–18.

⁴ § 28.

which I promised with my lips,
 and spake with my mouth when I was in trouble.
 I will bring unto Thee fatlings with the sweet savour of rams, 13
 I will offer bullocks and goats.

II. *declareth God's special goodness towards him, because of his innocency.*

O come hither and hearken, all ye that fear God, 14
 and I will tell you what He hath done for my soul!
 I gave Him praises with my mouth, 15
 yea, I called unto Him with my tongue:
 'if I incline unto wickedness with mine heart, 16
 'the Lord will not hear me.'

III.

But God hath heard me, 17
 and considered the voice of my prayer;
 praised be God,
 who hath not cast out my prayer, 18
 nor turned His mercy from me.

Ver. 15. *with my tongue.* Literally 'I called unto Him with my mouth, praise *under* my tongue;' the word which the mouth dwells on being compared to a *hidden* treasure, as in Job xx. 12; 'Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he *hide* it *under* his tongue, though he spare it and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth.'

Ver. 16 is a quotation from the prayer, made by the Psalmist in the hour of trouble, of which this is the leading thought: he had purified his heart before he dared to address the Lord, and by this had won the answer to his prayer.

§ 31. PSALM XII.

THIS is an elegy; but not as in some preceding Psalms on the personal sufferings and persecutions of the faithful¹, but on the growing corruption of the nation.

The Psalmist is appalled by the rottenness of society around him; unscrupulous ambition appears to rule supreme; truth is scorned as folly and the god of lies is enthroned in the national heart². But God had not left himself without a witness. The prophets had already

¹ As in § 26. vi. and § 27. xiii.

² *vv.* 2, 4, 8, and note on § 47. xxxvi.

raised their voices against this corruption: Isaiah had probably already entered on his mission. The thoughts of a coming judgment and of the establishment of a righteous kingdom upon earth, which they foresaw¹, had already become the stay and consolation² of the faithful.

I. *The Psalmist craveth help of God against the untruth,*

Help, Jehovah, for there is not one godly man left, 1
for faithfulness is minished from among the children of men;
they talk vanity, every one with his neighbour; 2
they do but flatter with their lips and dissemble in their
double heart.

II. *and against the pride of the oppressors;*

May Jehovah root out all deceitful lips, 3
and the tongue that speaketh proud things,
which say, 'with our tongue will we prevail, 4
'our lips are on our side, who is lord over us?'

III. *but he bethinketh him of the Prophet's words,*

For the oppression of the needy, because of the deep sighing 5
of the poor,
I will up, saith Jehovah,
I will set him in safety that longeth for it.
The words of Jehovah are pure words, 6
like as silver which from earth is cleansed and purified
seven times in the fire.

Ver. 2. *vanity*, *i.e.* falsehood: cp. § 142. cxliv. 11, where the parallelism shews its connexion with 'iniquity.'

Ver. 3. *proud things*, the proud speech is given in ver. 4.

Ver. 4. *with our tongue will we prevail*, or better, 'We are allied with our tongues.' They say in their hearts, if not openly, 'Our god is that which wins us our way in the world, viz. Deceit and Lies.' Cp. Hab. i. 11, 16, 'They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.' Cp. Phil. iii. 19.

Ver. 6. *The words of Jehovah*, with reference to the oracle of God quoted in ver. 5. *pure*, *i.e.* have no admixture of flattery and deceit, as the words of men have. This is the ground of the Psalmist's confidence in the oracle. *earth*, *i.e.* from alloy of earthy particles and dross.

¹ vv. 5, 6,

² v. 7.

IV. *and feeleth assured of God's protection.*

'Thou shalt keep them, O Jehovah, 7
 Thou shalt preserve him from this generation for ever!
 the ungodly walk on every side, 8
 when wickedness exalteth itself among the children of men.

Ver. 7. *them*, the godly of ver. 1. *him*, the godly sufferer who longeth for God's salvation [ver. 6].

Ver. 8. The last verse is a description of the words *this generation* in ver. 7.

§§ 32, 33. PSALMS LXII. AND XXXIX.

THERE is a striking resemblance in the style and phraseology of these two Psalms, which seems to justify their being attributed to one author¹. If this be the case, they supplement one another in a remarkable manner and present a noble picture of the triumph of faith over the depression arising from a sense of religious isolation and the horrors of a mortal sickness.

§ 32. PSALM LXII.

I N the 62nd Psalm, as we see the prophet contending single-handed against the apostates of his age, who in their fierce jealousy were attempting to drag him down from his spiritual preeminence, we think instinctively of Elijah; we remember how his spirit, vehement by nature and incapable of the fear of death, though nurtured in solitude, was yet crushed by the want of religious sympathy, and we are filled with admiration at the noble attitude of the author of this Psalm, possessing his soul in 'quietness and confidence,' and never alone, because the Almighty is with him.

I. *Resignation of true faith*

Wait only in silence upon God, O my soul! 1
 for of Him cometh my salvation;

Ver. 1. *wait upon God*. Cp. Exod. xiv. 13. *only*. The frequent recurrence of this word is characteristic of these two Psalms. See vv. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 9 (*but, i. e.* only), and § 33. xxxix. 6, 12.

¹ Cp. lxii. 9 with xxxix. 6 and lxii. 10 with xxxix. 7.

He only is my rock and my salvation, 2
 He is my defence; I shall not greatly fall!

II. *amid the attacks of apostates.*

How long do ye all assail a man, and break him in pieces? 3
 as a tottering wall,
 a wall to be broken down?
 their device is only how to thrust him from his height; 4
 their delight is in lies,
 they give good words in their mouth but curse with their heart!
 nevertheless, my soul, wait only in silence upon God! 5
 for my hope is in Him;
 He only is my rock and my salvation, 6
 He is my defence; I shall not fall!
 in God is my help and my glory, 7
 the rock of my might, and my refuge is in God.

III. *The emptiness of human strength.*

O put your trust in Him always, ye people, 8
 pour out your hearts before Him;
 for God is our refuge!
 the children of men are but a breath, and the sons of the mighty are as
 lay them on the balance,
 they are but a breath all together!
 O trust not in wrong, and take no pride in robbery: 10
 if riches increase, set not your heart upon them!
 God spake once; twice also have I heard the same; 11
 that power belongeth unto God!
 and Thou, O Lord, art merciful: 12
 for Thou rewardest every man according to his work!

Ver. 11. *twice also, i. e.* 'often.' Cp. Job xxxiii. 14, 'God speaketh, yea twice,' and Job xl. 5.

§ 33. PSALM XXXIX.

‘THE most beautiful of all the elegies in the Psalter.’ The struggle depicted here is not against the wicked and apostate, but against the King of Terrors. Death, awful in every age, was at this time something at the thought of which the stoutest and holiest quailed¹. Men who believed in a sure and speedy distribution of rewards and punishments in this life from the hand of a personal God, and who had not yet attained to the conviction of a life beyond the grave, could not leave the world either with the apathy of a Stoic or with the resignation of a Christian.

To the Psalmist the approach of death would have been appalling even amidst the sympathy of believers and the consolation of friends. How doubly bitter when the ungodly and the scoffer twit him with his afflictions as a triumphant refutation of his belief in the sure interposition and the omnipotence of Jehovah²! His pain, he feels, must be endured in silence.

But the pain³ though long suppressed at length obtains the mastery, and the struggle between these two opposing feelings issues in this vehement outburst of despair, which gradually subsides, as his thoughts⁴ pass from the frailty of man to the overruling omnipotence of God. In hope and in prayer to Him the desponding heart finds comfort, the highest to which we can attain short of that higher hope of victory over death.

The remarkable similarity between this Psalm and the speeches of Job, contained in the chapters from the 3rd to the 31st, can hardly be accidental, and a careful comparison of the two would lead to the belief that the Psalm was known to the writer of the book of Job and might have occasioned the attempt which is there made to find a higher solution for the difficulties and perplexities of the problem of life.

¹ Cp. §§ 26, 27. vi, xiii.² v. 1—3.³ v. 4—7.⁴ Cp. § 81. lxxvii. 10.

I. *The Psalmist would fain keep silence before the wicked, but pain compelleth him to speak.*

I said, 'let me take heed to my ways, 1
 'that I offend not with my tongue:
 'let me keep my mouth as it were with a bridle, 2
 'while the ungodly is in my sight!'
 I held my tongue and spake not of my desire, 3
 but it was pain and grief to me:—
 my heart was hot within me, 4
 while I was musing the fire kindled:
 at the last I spake with my tongue;
 'O Jehovah, let me know mine end, 5
 'and the number of my days, how long I have to live,
 'that I may know how frail I am!
 'behold, Thou hast made my days as it were a span long, 6
 'and mine age is even as nothing before Thee:
 'verily every man living is but a breath!
 'man walketh as a vain shadow; 7
 'he disquieteth himself in vain:
 'he heapeth up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them!

II. *Amid his misery he findeth help in God, yet the wrath of God is terrible to human weakness:*

'And now, Lord, what is my hope? 8
 'truly my hope is even in Thee!
 'deliver me from all mine offences, 9
 'make me not a rebuke unto the foolish!
 'I am become dumb, and open not my mouth: 10
 'for it is Thy doing!
 'take Thy rod away from me, 11
 'I am even consumed by the means of Thy heavy hand!

Ver. 3. *desire, i. e.* of the good which I had lost and which I wished to regain.

‘when Thou with rebukes dost chasten man for sin, 12
 ‘and frettest away his beauty as a moth,
 ‘every man is but a breath!

III. *he seeketh rest in an appeal to God's compassion.*

‘Hear my prayer, O Jehovah, and give heed to my complaint, 13
 ‘hold not Thy peace at my tears!
 ‘for I am a stranger with Thee, 14
 ‘and a sojourner as all my fathers were;
 ‘turn away Thy face from me that I may recover my gladness, 15
 ‘before I go hence and be no more seen!’

Ver. 12. *moth.* Cp. Job xiii. 28.

Ver. 14. *sojourner.* Cp. Gen. xlvii. 9.

Ver. 15. *Thy face, i. e.* ‘the look of Thy displeasure,’ Job vii. 19; xiv. 6.

§ 34. PSALM XC.

THIS has been called the funeral hymn of the world. The troubles of the times in which the Psalmist's life had been cast made him realize to the full the great truth of the frailty of man and the transitoriness of all that is human. This truth has a far different significance to the spiritual and to the worldly man. To the worldly man it brings either despair or recklessness; a folding of the hands in fatalistic indifference, or the spirit of ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’ To the spiritual man it is the counterpart of the higher truth of the eternity of God; the lesson it teaches him is not despair but resignation, not fatalism or frivolity but faith and earnestness. The criterion of man's greatness is not his power of resistance to God, but his power to co-operate with God's work and to bring his own will into harmony with the will of God. The highest prayer which man can offer to God is ‘Thy will be done,’ and it is only when the union between the human and the divine will is complete that the work of man can gain a blessing for itself and exert a lasting influence on the world.

I. *God's power; man's weakness.*

Lord! THOU hast been our refuge from one generation to another! 1
 before the mountains were brought forth, 2
 or ever the earth and the world were made,
 from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God:
 Thou turnest man to destruction, 3
 again Thou sayest, **Come again, ye children of men:**
 —for a thousand years in Thy sight 4
 are but as yesterday when it vanisheth,
 and as a watch in the night;—
 Thou scatterest them, they are as a dream in the morning, 5
 yea, even as the grass which groweth up;
 in the morning it is green and groweth up, 6
 in the evening it is dried up and withered.

II. *Sin, the source of man's weakness.*

For we consume away in Thy displeasure, 7
 and are afraid at Thy wrathful indignation:
 Thou hast set our misdeeds before Thee, 8
 and our secret sins in the light of Thy countenance:
 for when Thou art angry all our days are gone, 9
 we bring our years to an end as a sound that dieth away:

Ver. 2. *Before the mountains.* Cp. Prov. viii. 25: Wisdom speaketh;

‘Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth—
 while as yet He had not made the earth nor the fields, * *
 when He prepared the heavens, I was there;
 when He set a compass upon the face of the deep.’

Ver. 4. *yesterday, when it vanisheth, i.e.* at its vanishing. The minutes seem to flow more quickly as the day nears its close.

Ver. 5. *dream—grass.* There is here a double comparison; life is compared to a dream, and to flowers, which in Palestine spring up in the morning and are killed by the midday sun. For the former cp. § 33. xxxix. 7; § 80. lxxiii. 19; Isaiah xxix. 8; for the latter cp. § 62. xxxvii. 2; Job xiv. 2; Isaiah xxxvii. 27.

Ver. 8. *misdeeds.* Jeremiah xxxii. 19, ‘For Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the children of men, to give every one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings.’

the days of our age are threescore years and ten, or scarce 10
fourscore years ;

yea, even their strength is but vanity and a thing of nought,
so soon passeth it away, and we are gone :
who knoweth the power of Thy wrath? 11

for even as Thy majesty so is Thy displeasure :
teach us then to number our days, 12
and to bring the offering of an understanding heart.

III. *A prayer for the return of God's favour.*

Turn Thee again, O Jehovah! Oh! how long—? 13
be gracious unto Thy servants!

O refresh us with Thy mercy and that soon, 14
so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life!

comfort us again now after the days that Thou hast plagued us, 15
and the years wherein we have suffered adversity!

shew Thy servants Thy work, 16
and their children Thy glory!

and the glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us! 17
prosper Thou the work of our hands upon us,

O prosper Thou our handy-work!

Ver. 10. *their strength*, *i.e.* the prime of their years, when their strength is at the height.

Ver. 11. *majesty*, *i.e.* dreadfulness. Ezek. i. 18.

Ver. 13. *how long?* *i.e.* how long will it be before Thou turnest to visit us? Cp. § 124. lxxxix. 45; Is. vi. 11; Rev. vi. 10.

Ver. 15. *after*, *i.e.* according to or in proportion to, as in the Litany, 'Neither reward us after our iniquities.'

Ver. 16. *Thy work*. The great work here prayed for is that of the Deliverer or Messiah, to which the Prophets of the 8th century so often refer. Is. xxviii. 21; xxix. 23; Hab. iii. 2. Cp. Notes to § 37. lxxvi. and § 63. lxxii. on Expectations of a Messiah,

§§ 35—39. PSALMS XLVI, XLVIII, LXXVI, LXXV, LXV, CELEBRATING THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB AND THE REPULSE OF THE ASSYRIAN INVASION.

FEW events in the history of Israel so powerfully influenced the national character as the destruction of the host of Sennacherib. Men saw in it an irresistible proof of divine deliverance from their misery and oppression. The golden age of Moses and David seemed to return. Heretofore they had heard with their ears, now they saw with their eyes the mighty deliverance of God¹. New thoughts naturally sprang into life. The first of these was increased reverence for the Holy City and the Temple², from whose sacred walls the fury of the oppressor had glanced harmlessly away. The hope, faith and aspiration of the true in heart centred on the Temple, as the visible emblem of the protection of God.

Again, the more they realized the foundation on which their national glory rested, the more did they become convinced of the transitory nature of heathen empires and the rottenness that lies at their core. The true source of power was the Invisible. Others, in the words of the Psalmist, might 'put their trust in chariots and horses,' but they would remember the name of the Lord their God.

The inviolability of Sion and the omnipotence of Jehovah passed with the Israelites from the domain of belief to that of demonstrated fact. It had been incontestably proved before the eyes of their astonished foes. The world, they said, could no longer believe in the protection of its own national deities, but would haste to unite itself to the kingdom of Jehovah and delight in the protection of Sion. Hence arose a higher conception of the future of the chosen people. Their religion was to triumph not by exterminating its opponents, but by winning them over to the allegiance of Jehovah: not by sharpening the edge of the sword, but by opening the doors of the fold³. Contact even on the battle-field with nations whom

¹ § 36. xlviii. 9.

² §§ 35, 36. xlv, xlviii.

³ §§ 37, 38. lxxvi, lxxv.

their fathers had never known had done something to enlarge the views of the Israelites and to plant in them the germ of that cosmopolitan feeling which here begins to find expression in the Psalter, rising gradually into greater clearness, till it culminates in the 87th Psalm. It is interesting to observe the dim dawning of the feeling which eventually drove the Pharisees to compass sea and land to win a single proselyte.

These and kindred thoughts are powerfully expressed in the following Psalms¹, and even more fully by the prophet Isaiah, to whom or to whose school the earlier of these Psalms at least may probably be referred.

§ 35. PSALM XLVI.

I. *God a refuge in storm and tempest:*

God is our refuge and strength, 1
a very present help in trouble,
therefore will we not fear though the earth do quake, 2
though the mountains totter in the midst of the sea,
though the waters thereof rage and swell, 3
and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.
Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, is with us,
the God of Jacob is our tower of strength.

II. *as the stream of Siloam, so hath been His presence to the besieged:*

There is a stream the waters whereof make glad the city of God, 4
the holy places of the tabernacle of the most Highest:

Ver. 1. *refuge*. This was Luther's favourite Psalm in times of peril; he founded on it the well-known hymn, 'Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott.'

Ver. 3. *Jehovah—strength*. The burden has been inserted after Ewald. The Psalm was apparently composed for a public festivity, with a burden to be sung by the multitude after each of the three divisions.

Ver. 4. *stream*. Compared with the waterless deserts around, Judæa and Jerusalem were well watered, and drought pressed more severely on the besiegers than the besieged. The allusion here is to the well-known rill and pool of Siloam; which is probably 'Hezekiah's pool between the two pools,' Is. xxii. 11, and 'the pool of Siloah by the king's garden,' Neh.

¹ §§ 35—38. xlvī; xlviii; lxxvi, lxxv.

God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; 5
 God will help her, the morning draweth nigh:
 the nations raged, the kingdoms were moved, 6
 at the voice of His thunder the earth melteth.
Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, is with us, 7
the God of Jacob is our tower of strength.

III. *His wonders in destroying the Assyrians.*

Come hither and behold the work of Jehovah, 8
 what wonders He hath wrought upon the earth:
 He maketh wars to cease in all the world, 9
 He breaketh the bow and knappeth the spear in sunder,
 and burneth the chariots in the fire.
 We still then, and know that I am God, 10
 I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the
 earth.
Jehovah, Lord of Hosts, is with us, 11
the God of Jacob is our tower of strength.

iii. 15, ii. 14. So in Isaiah viii. 6, the gentle sovereignty of the house of Judah is represented by the 'waters of Siloah, which go softly,' in contrast to the overflowing torrent, which represents the invading force of the king of Assyria. Cp. § 90. cxxiv. 3 note. The pool of Siloam was by the king's garden, Neh. iii. 15.

Ver. 9. *burneth*. The horses of the Assyrian army were smitten as well as the soldiers, and the abandoned chariots were burned as useless; cp. Is. ix. 5, 'for every greave of the warrior in the conflict and every garment rolled in blood shall be for burning and fuel of fire.'

§ 36. PSALM XLVIII.*

I. *Beauty of Sion, the dwelling of God.*

Great is Jehovah and worthy to be praised, 1
 in the city of our God, even upon His holy hill:
 beauteous on high,—the joy of the whole earth,— 2
 is the hill of Sion, in the sides of the north,
 the fortress of the great King.

Ver. 2. *beauteous*. Cp. Lam. ii. 15, 'All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The

* For Introduction cp. §§ 35—39.

God hath revealed Himself within her towers
as a sure refuge.

God upholdeth the same for ever!

II. *Terror of the allied kings at the sight of her.*

For, lo! the kings of the earth took counsel,	3
and marched up together:	
they cast a look upon her and marvelled,	4
they were astonished and sore afraid:	
fear took hold upon them there,	5
and pain as of a woman in travail,	
through a storm from the east	6
that breaketh in pieces ships of Tarshish:	
like as we have heard, so have we seen	
in the city of Jehovah Lord of Hosts, the city of our God;	7
<i>God upholdeth the same for ever!</i>	

III. *Judah celebrateth God's loving-kindness in the Temple.*

We think on Thy loving-kindness, O God,	8
in the midst of Thy Temple:	

perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?' also **Ezek.** xxiv. 25, 'The joy of their glory;' and **Is.** lx. 15, 'joy of many generations.' *Joy* is the proverbial title of Sion. *Sion*, though 300 feet lower than the Mount of Olives, had from its sanctity a grandeur to the Jews far above all hills. See § 114. lxviii. 16.

sides of the north. See **Is.** xiv. 13, 'For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will sit also on the sides of the north.' Compare for this use of the word *sides* **Jer.** vi. 22, 'a people cometh from the north country and a great nation from the sides [*i. e.* ends] of the earth.' The oriental heathens regarded the extreme north as the Elborg or dwelling of their Gods. It was to them what Olympus was to the Greeks, the Walhalla to the Teutons and Scandinavians: as the clouds rested on the summits of the hills, heaven and earth seemed to meet. Not unnaturally the Psalmist in speaking of the Assyrians applies their term to Jerusalem the real residence of God.

God upholdeth. This Psalm was plainly designed as a *Temple-song* (ver. 8). The burthen has been introduced at the end of the first division, as in the preceding Psalm.

Vv. 5, 6. Awe fell upon them as they beheld Sion, and their ranks were broken, even as a storm broke the fleet of Jehoshaphat at Eziongeber. See **1 Kings** xxii. 48. *Tarshish*, probably Cadiz in Spain. By *ships of Tarshish* are meant 'powerful ships' for long voyages. Compare our 'East Indiamen.'

according to Thy name of God, so soundeth Thy praise to the 9
world's end;

Thy right hand is full of righteousness:
mount Sion rejoiceth, 10

the daughters of Judah are glad,
because of Thy judgments!

walk about Sion and go round about her, 11
tell ye the towers thereof,

mark well her bulwarks, count up her strong places— 12
that ye may tell them that come after!

for this God is our God for ever and ever, 13
He will be our guide for everlasting.

Ver. 11. *tell ye*, i.e. count; said in mockery. The Assyrians had counted the towers of Sion for destruction. So Is. xxxiii. 18, of the same event, with a similar irony: 'Where is the scribe? where is the weigher? where is he that counteth the towers?' The whole chapter should be read as illustrative of this Psalm.

§ 37. PSALM LXXVI.

IN the 46th Psalm we heard, as it were, the summons to the inhabitants of Jerusalem to come and behold upon the battle-field the mighty works of the Lord, the broken bow and spear, and the horseless chariot burning in the fire¹. In the 48th we seemed to hear them rendering thanks for their deliverance to Jehovah, but Jehovah is still the God of the Hebrew alone. This and the following Psalm are written in the calm which followed the victory. In them we find the wider² and nobler thoughts which the Assyrian overthrow had called into life. It is as though the wall of partition had already fallen and revealed to the eye a glimpse of the Messianic kingdom³, where all the nations of the earth should unite together in the acknowledgment and worship of the true God.

¹ Cp. § 35. xlv. 6.

² Cp. ver. 10 and note.

³ Cp. notes on Messianic expectations here and in § 63.

I. *God is great in Sion and breaketh the rod of the oppressor;*

In Judah is God known,	I
His name is great in Israel,	
for at Salem He made His tabernacle,	2
and His resting-place in Sion :	
there brake He the arrows of the bow,	3
the shield, the sword and the battle !	

II. *none may resist His might,*

Full of brightness art Thou, more glorious	4
than the strongholds of robbers :	
the proud were stripped, they slept their sleep,	5
and the men of might found not their hands ;	
at Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,	6
both chariot and horse lie fallen.	

III. *for He executeth righteous judgments upon the nations of the earth;*

Thou, even Thou art to be feared,	7
and who may stand in Thy sight when Thou art angry ?	
Thou didst cause judgment to peal forth from heaven,	8
the earth trembled—and was still,	
when God arose to judgment,	9
to help all the meek upon the earth.	

Ver. 2. *Salem*, poetical abbreviation of Jerusalem, betokens the dwelling of peace, the abode of Jehovah, before whose walls the fury of battle must cease.

Ver. 3. *arrows*. Literally, 'the lightnings of the bow,' see Zech. ix. 14, 'And His arrow shall go forth as the lightning.'

Ver. 4. *strongholds*, *i. e.* the fortresses of Palestine from which the Assyrians swept down upon Jerusalem. According to ancient custom their walls had gleamed with the splendour of the invaders' shields. See Cant. iv. 4, 'Thy neck is like the tower of Damascus, builded for an armoury, whereon they hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.' Ezekiel (xxvii. 11), speaking of the splendid appearance of Tyre, says, 'They hanged their shields upon thy walls round about : they have made thy beauty perfect.' See Stanley, *Jewish Church*, Part II. Chap. xxvi. note, to which the above references are due.

Ver. 5. *the proud*, *i. e.* the warriors were stripped of their gleaming arms and powerless as though they had lost their hands and were sleeping the sleep of death.

IV. *the furious shall bow before Him and all nations shall do Him homage.*

For the fierceness of men shall turn to Thy praise, 10
 the residue of fierceness shall do Thee honour:
 promise unto Jehovah your God and keep your vows! 11
 let all that are around Him do homage to His majesty!
 He moweth down the pride of princes, 12
 He is terrible to the kings of the earth.

Ver. 10. *fierceness—praise.* A new view of the judgments of Jehovah. He chasteneth the heathen that they may turn to Him. Many are fallen, but the remnant of wild barbarians (*residue of fierceness*) shall learn His power and worship His name with praise.

NOTE ON THE ORIGIN OF MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS.

Among the many national characteristics which elevated the Jews above the other nations of antiquity, none is more striking than their power of living in and for the future. Nothing in the rich heritage of religious life and aspirations has been more fruitful in important consequences than this. The character of the Israelites, full of religious confidence and perseverance even to obstinacy, was indeed a favourable soil for the development of aspirations such as these: but their origin lay deeper and must be sought in the revelation of the unity of God and of the eternal justice by which the world is ruled. In any attempt to trace a part of God's revelation of Himself in the government of the world and in the heart of man, it is hardly possible to lay too much stress on the selection of the Jews for the reception of this fundamental religious truth, and their capacity of framing upon it their whole national and domestic life.

Such a revelation, working on a religious assurance which loved to regard the Israelites as a chosen and favoured people, could not but produce great ideas alike in their prosperity and their adversity. In the hour of their prosperity the vulgar looked for a wider empire and a still higher state of material welfare: the pious few longed for a time when righteousness should go hand in hand with wealth and the nation be under the direct inspiration of the Almighty. In dark times when the chosen people bowed beneath the rod of the idolater or the infidel, this hope burned brighter than ever. Other nations could solve the problem of suffering righteousness and triumphant sin, either by putting evil on a level with good and assigning to each passion its

appropriate deity, or by abandoning the world to the reign of chance could acquiesce in the apparently capricious bestowal of happiness and suffering through the denial of all moral order and government in the world. The Jews on the contrary interpreted the past and looked forward to the future by the light of a revelation which raised them above the domain of accident and the limits of human life. In their ears had rung the words 'I am the God that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt. Thou shalt have no other Gods than me.' 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord Thy God is one God,' and again, 'Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity whose name is Holy, 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the humble.'" 'There is no peace,' saith the Lord, 'unto the wicked.' Such revelations rendered fatalistic despair and fatalistic security equally impossible and made the divine government visible beneath the confusions of the world.

To the Hebrews the anomalies of life were only for a time. God would vindicate Himself. Impious men and impious nations stood upon slippery ground: the righteous alone was firmly planted, and his seed should endure for ever. God would avenge His saints and execute 'righteous judgment on the earth.' Thus in moments of intense national suffering prophets either raised the hope of their countrymen by depicting the house of David as again triumphant and smiting down the nations in a day of judgment and retribution, or else consoled their sorrow by describing the anointed of God as uniting hostile tribes under a reign of peace and love and leading all peoples to one fold under one shepherd.

Thus as in individual life it is the peculiar blessing of the 'pure in heart' to 'see God,' to trace the working of His hand not so much in the bestowal of special blessings as in the sanctification of ordinary life, so in the history of the Jewish nation, it was a step fraught with momentous consequences, when, from a belief in the exertion of the Divine power on special occasions, they rose to the far higher revelation of the Almighty ruling through the order which He has appointed in His world. In the earlier period of their history it seemed that God's participation in the government of the world must be occasional and extraordinary. Even to Samuel it was not revealed at once that the change inevitably required by the progress of the world from the irregular government of the Judges to the regularity and system of the

monarchy was itself a part of the Divine plan¹. Thus the idea of the intervention of Jehovah through the agency of an established line of rulers, which after the reign of David was the moving idea of religious thought inseparably linked with the future of David's house, was originally not only hostile but almost fatal to the attempt to establish the monarchy at all². The idea of fixing Jehovah's vicegerents to a particular line seemed to Samuel impious and tantamount to rejecting Jehovah Himself. Saul's prophetic inspiration³ proved him to be the man whom God had destined for the throne; but when his inspiration ceased his title to the kingdom ceased with it, and the throne was bestowed on another inspired member of the prophet's company. Then as afterwards the prophet was raised above the king by his inspiration: for the same reason he was above the priest also.

In David prophecy, kingship, priesthood were united⁴; and his manifold capacities, backed as they were by the prophetic blessing, made him to his own people the anointed representative of Jehovah, and to all subsequent ages the type of the anointed prophet and deliverer of the nation.

As is necessarily the case with every religious belief which relates to the future, the idea of God's anointed or the coming 'Messiah' was different to different classes and in different times. To the vulgar it presented itself in the material aspect of a mighty conqueror establishing an earthly kingdom: the higher minds longed for a visible representative of the purposes of Jehovah and a kingdom 'wherein dwelleth righteousness.' David's character answered both conceptions. He that rose from the sheepfold to the throne, and extended his dominion from Jordan to the Euphrates, was a fit type of one who should make Israel triumphant over every foe. The man after God's own heart was a worthy ancestor for the ideal ruler of the most religious and spiritual minds. Thus it was that the first prophetic declaration of the future glory of the house of David sank deeper and deeper into the heart of the nation, as each successive ruler failed to satisfy the hopes of his contemporaries, and the military and spiritual greatness of the national hero of the past was magnified by comparison with his worthless or at best but partially successful descendants⁵.

¹ Cp. 1 Sam. viii. 22.

³ 1 Sam. x. 6, 11.

² Cp. Introduction to § 16. ii.

⁴ Cp. § 10. cx. 4.

⁵ 2 Sam. vii. 5—17.

Thus the conviction that David was the true type and only worthy ancestor of the Anointed of Jehovah, the one who was to bring salvation to the falling empire and renewal to the spiritual life of the nation, gained greater strength and vitality as time rolled on,—as the Jews saw more and more from contact with heathen empires that God's true vicegerent is he who strives to establish not his own empire but that of God, who comes to do not his own will but the will of Him that sent him

§ 38. PSALM LXXV.*

THE overthrow of the Assyrians bore to the prophets a deeper meaning than the mere deliverance of the hour. It was to them the visible pledge that God would for ever execute judgment in the earth, while it supplied a terrible warning against that godless arrogance which would prove as fatal to the Jews as it had proved to the heathen.

I. *God at His appointed seasons appeareth to judge the world:*

Unto Thee, O God, did we give thanks,	1
we gave thanks to Thee and Thy name is nigh;	
men told of Thy wondrous works.	2
For I choose an appointed time (<i>saith Jehovah</i>);	3
I, even I, judge according to right;	
the earth quaketh and all the inhabitants thereof;	4
I have established the pillars of it.	

II. *for to Him alone doth judgment belong:*

I say unto the fools, 'deal not so madly!'	5
and to the ungodly, 'set not up your horn!'	

Ver. 2. *wondrous works, i. e.* Thy presence is revealed in the wondrous works which we have seen. This serves to introduce the words of Jehovah, proclaiming that His judgment cometh in due time, unalterable as the everlasting hills, on which as *pillars* He hath established the earth. Cp. § 4. xxiv. vv. 1—6 note.

Ver. 4. *pillars, i. e.* mountains. Cp. § 4. xxiv. 1, 2 and note.

Ver. 5. The word *horn* was used by the Hebrews metaphorically to express either honour, as § 136. cxii. 9, § 123. cxxxii. 18, etc., or strength, Mic. iv. 13, 'I will make thine horn iron,' and Deut. xxxiii. 17, etc. To humble and cast down was often represented by the figure of breaking or cutting off the horn, as here (ver. 11). So Lam. ii. 3, 'Cut off all the horn of Israel.' To exalt the horn of any one (or to make it bud) was to bestow honour and dignity upon him.

* See § 35, Introduction.

set not up your horn on high, 6
 and speak not with a stiff neck!
 for neither from the east, nor from the west, 7
 nor from the desert, nor from the hills—
 but God will judge; 8
 He putteth down one and setteth up another!
 in the hand of Jehovah there is a cup; 9
 the wine is red, full mixed; He poureth out of the same;
 as for the dregs thereof—all the ungodly of the earth 10
 shall drink them and suck them out.

III. *and He judgeth the folk righteously.*

But I will talk of the God of Jacob, 11
 and sing praises unto Him for ever;
 all the horns of the ungodly also will I break (*saith Jehovah*), 12
 and the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

Cp. §§ 123, 124. cxxxii. 18, lxxxix. 18, Ezek. xxix. 21. Here *to set up the horn* betokens presumption. Horn was also somewhat later a symbol for kingdom; Zech. i. 18 and Daniel, *passim*.

Ver. 7. *the desert, i. e.* the desert towards Egypt—the South: the hills are those of Hermon and Lebanon to the North. The meaning of the passage is, Judgment comes not from the visible portions of the earth but from the invisible hand of God. He as Lord of the house offers to each the *cup* of retribution and tribulation, as here, or of blessing, as in § 65. xvi. 6. Cp. Jer. xxv. 15, 16, 'Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.'

§ 39. PSALM LXV.

WE have here a Psalm of thanksgiving, intended to be sung in the Temple at a public festival, while sacrifices vowed in some protracted drought¹ were being offered in the Temple. To the thanksgiving however for a gracious rain and the hope of an abundant harvest², is added gratitude for a signal deliverance during a time of distress and commotion³. Thus the Psalm becomes a song of praise to Jehovah as alike the God of Nature and the God of History.

¹ *vv.* 1, 2, 9.

² *vv.* 9—14.

³ *vv.* 7, 8.

The dispersion of the Jews was already beginning, and the thought of their brethren in distant lands gave to the pious inhabitants of Jerusalem a keener sense of the beauty of the Temple and of the pleasure of attending its services¹.

I. *Worthy is Jehovah to be praised*

Unto Thee, O God, belongeth praise in Sion, 1
and unto Thee shall the vow be performed !
Thou that hearest prayer, 2
unto Thee doth all flesh come !
mine iniquity troubleth me sore ; 3
as for our sins, Thou shalt be merciful unto them !
blessed is he whom Thou choosest and takest to dwell in Thy courts ; 4
let us rejoice in the beauty of Thy House, in the holy place
of Thy Temple !

II. *in the works of nature and in His dealings with the children of men ;*

Wonderfully dost Thou show us grace, O God of our salvation, 5
Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the world and of
the uttermost sea !
who in His strength setteth fast the mountains, 6
and is girded about with power ;
who stilleth the raging of the sea and the noise of his waves, 7
and the madness of the peoples,
so that they that dwell in the ends of the earth are afraid at Thy 8
tokens ;
Thou fillest the outgoings of morning and evening with joy !

Ver. 4. *House*. See Isa. xi. 11—xii. 3. Already the sorrows of exile had prevented many from attending the festivals at Jerusalem.

Ver. 6. *girded* as the Lord of Hosts in battle. *setteth fast the mountains*, with especial reference to the impregnability of the hill of Sion during the Assyrian siege Cp. § 92. cxxv. 1, 'They that trust in the Lord shall be even as Mount Sion, which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.'

Ver. 7. *his*, the archaic form for *its*. See Glossary.

¹ vv. 4, 5, compared with Isaiah xi. 11—xii. 3.

III. *so also for the gracious rain which He hath sent upon the land.*

Thou hast visited the earth and watered it, 9
 and enriched it with the rain of heaven in full stream;
 Thou refreshedst her corn, for so Thou refreshest the earth; 10
 Thou wateredst her furrows and washedst down the ridges thereof, 11
 Thou madest it soft with showers,
 and blessedst the springing of it:
 Thou hast crowned the year with Thy goodness 12
 and Thy footsteps drop fatness:
 the very pastures of the wilderness drop fatness, 13
 and the hills deck themselves with rejoicing,
 the meadows clothe themselves with flocks; 14
 the valleys also stand so thick with corn,
 that they rejoice and shout for joy.

Ver. 12. *fatness*. Compare Job xxxviii. 26—30. Fruits and flowers spring up in His footsteps when Jehovah descends to bless the earth.

Ver. 14. *they*, this is interpreted by some commentators as referring to the cultivators 'that *men* rejoice and shout for joy.'

§§ 40—63. PSALMS COMPOSED AFTER THE ASSYRIAN INVASION.

THE overthrow of the Assyrians strengthened for a time the hands of the faithful worshippers of Jehovah, and facilitated the reforms of Hezekiah. The reformation however was only superficial, and was due rather to the influence of Isaiah upon the court than to any real impression made on the people at large. Idolatry had been generally connected with the foreign policy of the kings of Judah, as a necessary step towards extending their relations with foreign nations. The masses, no doubt, were easily influenced by the seductive argument of worldly advantage. In the golden era of the Jewish monarchy under David, religious zeal and national prosperity had been united and were hence not unnaturally regarded as inseparable. The doctrine that prosperity is the test of the possession of religious truth, perilous at all times, was especially dangerous in a materialistic age, when the

Hebrews felt themselves surpassed in wealth, empire and military renown. It was a true instinct which made the officers of Hezekiah¹ beg Rabshakeh not to speak in the Jewish tongue. They knew that the material prosperity, the splendour and centralization of the Assyrians would prove to the vulgar an unanswerable argument in favour of the Assyrian religion. Even Hezekiah, yielding probably to the popular wish, concluded an alliance with Egypt and thus paved the way for the abandoned heathenism of Manasseh. To the sensuality inseparable from oriental idolatry this monarch added the most pitiless persecution. Nothing was omitted which could insult and eradicate the worship of Jehovah. The faithful few glowed with indignation not only at the outrages offered to their religion and their God, but at the sufferings of their own friends who daily sealed their confession in blood amidst the triumph and mockery of the dissolute and profane.

Such a period was obviously ill calculated to produce the highest forms of religious poetry. Most of the Psalms composed in it breathe the spirit only too natural to such an epoch. Though in some² despair and bitterness yield to the soothing influences of a pure and unshaken faith, yet others³ give free vent to the exasperation produced by the most harrowing scenes of an unparalleled persecution.

Many find in the maledictory expressions of these Psalms sentiments repugnant to the more charitable dictates of their own religion; they should bear in mind that the Psalter—the imperishable monument of the poetical and religious inspiration of the Hebrews—was composed before God had revealed Himself to the world as a God not only of vengeance but of mercy.

§§ 40—42. PSALMS CXL, CXLI, CXLII.

THESE Psalms apparently belong to the period following the Assyrian invasion. The wide separation between the followers of Jehovah and the idolatrous faction has already begun. Seductive artifices, threats and violence are employed to induce the faithful to apostatize.

¹ 2 Kings xviii. 26.

² § 42. cxlii, § 47. xxxvi.

³ § 40. cxi.

The juxtaposition of three such Psalms in the Hebrew Psalter is not due to accidental arrangement. The similarity of language, the frequent recurrence of the same metaphors¹, the increasing severity of the trial to which the faithful are exposed, have always been considered conclusive evidence of their common authorship. United together they form a dramatic whole. The Psalmist is a man of position², whose fate is a matter of deep interest to the whole company of the faithful³. He is victorious in a triple trial. We see him triumphant over the malicious assaults of treachery and slander, unmoved by the allurements of insidious flattery, and finally unshaken by the horrors of an Eastern dungeon.

§ 40. PSALM CXL.*

I. *Prayer for deliverance from the malice*

Deliver me, O Jehovah, from the evil man,	1
and preserve me from the violent man,	
who imagine mischief in their heart,	2
and stir up strife all the day long:	
they have sharpened their tongues like a serpent,	3
adders' poison is under their lips.	

II. *and snares of the ungodly.*

Keep me, O Jehovah, from the hands of the ungodly,	4
preserve me from the violent men,	
who are purposed to overthrow my goings!	
the proud have laid cords for me and snares;	5
they have spread a net by the side of my path,	
they have set traps for me.	

III. *The Psalmist's hope is in Jehovah,*

I say to Jehovah, 'Thou art my God,'	6
hear, O Jehovah, the voice of my prayers!	

¹ cxi. 5, cxli. 10, cxlii. 3.

² cxli. 8.

³ cxlii. 9.

* See §§ 40-42, Introduction.

the Lord Jehovah is the strength of my health, 7
 a helmet for my head in the day of battle:
 let not the ungodly have his desire, O Jehovah! 8
 let not their device prosper, lest they get the victory.

IV. *who will requite the wicked for their wickedness,*

As for the poison of them that compass me about,— 9
 let them be covered with the mischief of their own lips;
 let hot burning coals fall upon them, 10
 let them be cast into the fire,
 and into the pit, that they rise not again:
 slanderers shall not prosper on the earth, 11
 evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.

V. *and avenge the cause of the patient and upright.*

Sure I am that Jehovah will avenge the poor, 12
 and maintain the cause of the helpless!
 but the righteous shall give thanks unto Thy name, 13
 and the just continue in Thy sight.

Ver. 10. *burning coals.* Cp. § 1. xi. 7. For *pit* compare Gen. xiv. 10: where *slime* means bitumen, with Layard's description of the firing of the bitumen pits at Nimroud by his Arabs: 'Tongues of flames and jets of gas driven from the burning *pit* shot through the murky canopy. To break the cindered crust and to bring fresh *slime* to the surface the Arabs threw large stones into the spring.'—*Nin. and Bab.* p. 202.

§ 41. PSALM CXLI.

WHILE the violent persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah was still raging¹, attempts had been made to induce the Psalmist to join the festivities of the court², possibly to secure his minstrelsy³. But how could he let his voice be heard in the palaces of those who had persecuted the righteous, and slain the judges in the land⁴? He feels that their proffered kindness is insidious, a snare to lure him into joining the unbelievers. In this spirit he prays to Jehovah to rescue him from this temptation⁵.

¹ vv. 7, 8.

² v. 4.

³ vv. 3 & 7.

⁴ v. 7.

⁵ vv. 9—11.

I. *The Psalmist prayeth to God at eventide,*

Jehovah, I call upon Thee, O haste Thee unto me! 1
 consider my voice when I cry unto Thee!
 let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as the incense, 2
 and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice!

II. *for strength to resist the lures of the wicked*

Set a watch, O Jehovah, before my mouth, 3
 and keep the door of my lips!
 let not my heart be inclined to any evil thing, 4
 let me not be occupied with ungodly works,
 and with the men that work wickedness;
 and let me not eat of their dainties.

III. *that his voice may not be heard at their festivities;*

Let the righteous rather smite me friendly and reprove me,— 5
 let not oil anoint mine head!—for my prayer goeth up 6
 ever in their calamities!
 their judges are overthrown in stony places: 7
 and shall they hear of my words that they were sweet?

Ver. 2. *evening sacrifice.* An allusion to the daily evening sacrifice at the Temple.

Ver. 5. *reprove me, i. e.* rather would I endure the reproving counsel of the upright for whom my grateful prayer rises in their affliction, than join in the festivities of the wicked.

oil. Cp. § 25. xxiii. 5, 'Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.' Dan. x. 3, 'I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine into my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all.' Oil was used by the Jews as by other oriental nations, partly for comfort, partly to give a glossy appearance at festivities to the skin and hair: here it is connected with *dainties* in ver. 4, and means the oil used in the feasts of the wicked.

Ver. 7. *their judges*, that is, the judges belonging to the *righteous* (ver. 5); with whose party the Psalmist associates himself (ver. 8).

overthrown—have been either actually dashed down from a height on to rocks (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 12); or, as is more in accordance with the sense of the passage, cast out to get their bread in desolate unproductive places; whence the starvation of ver. 8.

they, the righteous. The Psalmist asks, 'Shall my own friends, in the midst of their afflictions, hear that I am making merry in the festivities of the wicked?'

like as when one furroweth up the earth and cleaveth it, 8
our bones did stick out, we were nigh unto the grave.

IV. *and yieldeth not, for he trusteth in God for deliverance.*

But mine eyes look unto Thee, O Lord Jehovah; 9
in Thee is my trust; O pour not out my life!
keep me from the snare that they have laid for me; 10
and from the traps of the wicked doers!
let the ungodly fall into their own nets, 11
but as for me—let me ever escape them!

Ver. 8. *furroweth, i.e.* our bodies are furrowed from starvation, so that our bones are staring and starting through the skin, ready to be flung into the grave. Cp. Job xxxiii. 21:

‘His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen,

and his bones, which are not seen, stick out:

yea, his soul draweth near unto the grave and his life to the destroyers;’

and § 69. xxii. 14.

§ 42. PSALM CXLII.*

I. *The Psalmist in sore distress prayeth to Jehovah,*

I cry unto Jehovah with my voice, 1
yea, even unto Jehovah do I make my supplication,
I pour out my complaint before Him, 2
and shew Him of my trouble,
when my spirit is in heaviness: 3
yet Thou knowest my path, how in the way wherein I walk
they privily lay a snare for me!

II. *for he hath no other helper,*

I look upon my right hand and see, 4
and there is no man that knoweth me:
I have no place to flee unto, 5
and no man careth for my soul.
I cry unto Thee, O Jehovah! 6
I say, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

* Cp. § 40—42, Introduction.

III. *and the righteous regard his deliverance as a token for good.*

Consider my complaint, for I am brought very low: 7
 O deliver me from my persecutors, 8
 for they are too strong for me!
 bring my soul out of prison, 9
 that I may give thanks unto Thy name;
 the righteous wait to see that Thou mayest do me good!

§§ 43—53. PSALMS LV, V, LXIV, LII, XXXVI, LIV, LXI, LXIII,
 LVI—LVIII.

THIS group of Psalms abound in feelings which sprang from the dissensions of the falling kingdom. They shew us the bitterness with which the first thought of estrangement from Jerusalem broke upon the Jewish mind. In the earlier¹ of these Psalms this anticipation is only surmised, in the later ones² it receives its fulfilment. The terrible day of the destruction of the Temple has not yet come, but the Captivity has already commenced; and the Psalmist speaks as if he were one of those earlier exiles who, in the reigns of the later kings, were being dragged in ever-increasing numbers to the court of their Assyrian³ conquerors.

Divisions and dangers had beset the kingdom, and all who still feared God and obeyed Him were daily exposed to the treachery and calumny of 'false tongues⁴;' amid the embittered feelings of such a time, when new and unexpected treachery was being laid bare every day, we need not wonder at the intense imprecations⁵ which were heaped upon the destroyers of order and integrity in the land.

Yet a fervour not unworthy of a prophet breathes through many of these Psalms⁶. The very severity of the struggle against corruption

¹ §§ 43, 44, 46. lv, v, lii.

² §§ 49, 50. lxi, lxiii.

³ Tiglath Pileser (1 Chr. v. 26, 2 Kings xv. 29), Shalmaneser (2 Kings xvii. 3, 5), Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. 13) each in their turn had carried off bands of exiles; later the rise of the Babylonian upon the ruins of the Assyrian empire only brought in a new dynasty of captors, and the fear of Nineveh was changed into the fear of Babylon.

⁴ § 44. v. 9; § 46. lii. 4, 5; § 43. lv. 11, 22; § 52. lvii. 5; § 50. lxiii. 12; § 45. lxiv. 3, 8. Cp. Jer. xxviii. 15.

⁵ Cp. § 44. v. 11; § 43. lv. 16, 24; § 46. lii. 6; § 53. lviii. 9, 10; § 50. lxiii. 10, 11.

⁶ § 46. lii; § 53. lviii; § 45. lxiv. 5—10.

has brought out into greater clearness the eternity of God's justice and the certainty that the cause of the righteous must in the end prevail. The Psalmist feels the triumph is near at hand, and can we wonder that he dwells upon the details of the destruction of the ungodly with the fiery bitterness of a zealot¹? Could we expect the Jew to have learned a lesson, which the world has not yet learnt,—to leave the working out of God's plans to His own time, without arranging His rewards and punishments in the order of human anticipation?

§ 43. PSALM LV.

THIS Psalm presents a melancholy picture of Jerusalem² hastening to its fall. The royal city has fallen far from the ideal prescribed to it by David³. In his time no man was to dwell there but he who 'spoke the truth from his heart,' and 'all wicked doers were to be rooted out from the city of the Lord.' Now the old spirit is well-nigh gone: pressure from open enemies without⁴, treachery and strife within⁵, have made the hill of Sion an insecure home for the man of God. A prophet of this time⁶ has said of his countrymen, 'They all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net;' 'a man's enemies are those of his own house;' and what words can better pourtray the treachery of the friend⁷, who has exposed the Psalmist to this imminent danger⁸? In the first burst of indignation at this baseness he cries to God for help in his agony; fighting single-handed⁹, though not without hope, against the enemies of his God¹⁰, he yearns for deliverance from the struggle, and, with an exquisite pathos, prays to be transported to some oasis¹¹ in the wilderness which the wicked cannot trouble and the storm cannot assail.

I. *The Psalmist prayeth for help in danger,*

Hear my prayer, O God,

I

and hide not Thyself from my petition!

¹ Cp. § 44. v. 11; § 46. lii. 6; § 50. lxiii. 11; § 53. lviii. 7.

² *vv.* 10, 16.

³ Cp. § 5. xv. 2; § 6. ci. 5, 11.

⁴ *vv.* 12, 13.

⁵ *vv.* 10, 11.

⁶ Cp. Micah vii. 1—6. Ch. vi. and vii. are (according to Ewald) written not by Micah, but by another prophet of the 7th century.

⁷ *vv.* 14, 22.

⁸ *v.* 19.

⁹ *v.* 19.

¹⁰ *v.* 17.

¹¹ *vv.* 6—8.

take heed unto me and hear me, 2
 —I am spent with sighing and cry in my distress—
 the enemy crieth so and the ungodly cometh on so fast, 3
 for they assail me with mischief and are maliciously set against me!
 my heart is disquieted within me; 4
 and the fear of death is fallen upon me,
 fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, 5
 and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me;
 and I said: O that I had wings like a dove, 6
 for then would I fly away and be at rest!
 yea, then would I get me away far off, 7
 and remain in the wilderness!
 then would I haste me to a refuge 8
 from the stormy wind and tempest!

II. *and calleth on God to punish the iniquity of the city and the treachery of his friend;*

Destroy their tongues, O Lord, and cleave them asunder! 9
 for I have spied violence and strife in the city;
 day and night they go about upon her walls, 10
 mischief also and sorrow are within her:
 destruction is in the midst of her, 11
 oppression and guile go not out of her streets!
 —for it is not an enemy that doth me this dishonour, for then 12
 I could have borne it,
 neither is it my foe that doth magnify himself against me, 13
 for then I had hid myself from him;
 but it is even thou, a man like unto myself, 14
 my companion and mine own familiar friend;
 we took sweet counsel together 15
 and walked to the house of God as friends—

Ver. 4. *the fear of death.* Cp. § 103. cxvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *they, i. e.* violence and strife.

Ver. 14. *a man like unto myself, i. e.* of the same station as myself; so Jeremiah was opposed by a brother prophet, Pashur, the son of Immer (Jer. xx. 6), one of his earliest persecutors.

let death come hastily upon them! let them go down alive 16
 into the grave!
 for wickedness is in their dwellings and among them.

III. *he findeth calm in the thought of God's justice.*

As for me, I will call upon God, 17
 and Jehovah will help me;
 evening and morning and at noonday do I groan and cry aloud! 18
 (and so He heareth my voice,
 with His saving help He rescueth my life from the heat of the 19
 battle,
 for there were many against me);
 yea, I cry that God may hear, that He who is King of old may 20
 bring them down,
 for they keep not their oath and have no fear of God!
 he laid his hand upon them that were at peace with him, 21
 and he brake his covenant:
 the words of his mouth are softer than butter, having war in his 22
 heart,
 his words are smoother than oil, yet be they very swords!
 Cast thy care upon Jehovah, and HE will care for thee, 23
 He will never suffer the righteous to fall!
 and as for them, Thou, O God, wilt bring them into the pit of 24
 destruction;
 the bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half 25
 their days,
 but my trust shall be in Thee!

Ver. 16. *alive*, like Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Cp. Num. xvi. 23—34.

Ver. 19. *heat of the battle*, *i. e.* the hot persecution by the ungodly.

Ver. 21. *he*, *i. e.* mine enemy; observe the transition from *they* (ver. 20) to *he*. *laid his hand upon*, *i. e.* used violence. *covenant*, *i. e.* the covenant of friendship.

§ 44. PSALM V.*

THIS Psalm, like the 26th, is designed for the service of the Temple¹. As yet the open worshippers of Jehovah were not marked out for violent persecution; the scourge of the tongue was as yet the only weapon in the hands of the scorner; and a social stigma had fallen on all who by their zeal for the Temple and attendance at its services were recognized as the professed servants of Jehovah. The Psalmist feels that, as he offers his morning sacrifice of praise², he is publicly proclaiming his allegiance to Jehovah, and that hereafter any unworthy act of which he may be guilty will not only be disgraceful to himself, but will give occasion to the watchful enemies³ of Jehovah to sneer at the frailty of His worshipper.

I. *The Psalmist appealeth to God to hear him,*

Give ear unto my words, O Jehovah, 1
 consider my meditation!
 O hearken Thou unto the voice of my calling, my King and 2
 my God!
 for unto Thee will I make my prayer.

II. *for God ever helpeth the godly,*

O Jehovah, in the morning dost Thou hear my voice, 3
 early do I wait on Thee and watch;
 for Thou art a God that hast no pleasure in wickedness, 4
 neither shall the wicked man dwell with Thee;
 such as be foolish shall not stand in Thy sight, 5
 Thou hatest all them that work iniquity;
 Thou shalt destroy them that speak lies; 6
 Jehovah abhorreth the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.

Ver. 3. *watch*, i. e. look out as a watchman.

Ver. 4. *wickedness*. He is sure of safety in God's house; for he will meet none of the wicked there.

* See § 43, Introduction.

¹ v. 7.

² v. 3.

³ v. 8.

III. *especially in their hour of need,*

But as for me, in the multitude of Thy mercy will I come into 7
 Thine house,
 and in Thy fear will I worship at Thy holy Temple:
 lead me, O Jehovah, in Thy righteousness, because of them that 8
 lie in wait for me,
 make Thy way plain before my face!
 for there is no faithfulness in their mouth, 9
 their inward parts are very wickedness;
 their throat is an open sepulchre, 10
 they flatter with their tongue.

IV. *and defeateth the plots of the wicked.*

Hold them guilty, O God, let them fall away from their counsels, 11
 cast them down in the multitude of their ungodliness,
 for they have rebelled against Thee;
 and let all them that put their trust in Thee rejoice, 12
 let them ever shout for joy, and be Thou their defence;
 let them also that love Thy name be joyful in Thee;
 for Thou, O Jehovah, dost bless the righteous, 13
 and with Thy favour dost compass him as with a shield.

Ver. 8. *plain*. Cp. § 24. xxvii. 13.

Ver. 10. *open sepulchre*. Such is their lying that a man may fall unawares into their wiles, as into an open grave.

§ 45. PSALM LXIV. *

THE Psalmist utters a prophetic denunciation of the enemies who are secretly¹ plotting against him, and depicts in a bold figure the sudden catastrophe² by which the wicked shall be overthrown and the cause of the righteous shall prevail.

* See § 43, Introduction.

¹ As in § 44. v.

² v. 7.

I. *Prayer for help,*

Hear my voice, O God, when I cry, 1
 preserve my life from fear of the enemy,
 hide me from the secret counsels of the wicked, 2
 and from the gathering together of evil-doers,
 who whet their tongue like a sword, 3
 and make ready their arrows, even bitter words,
 that they may privily shoot at him that is perfect, 4
 that they may shoot suddenly and fear not.

II. *for the plots of the wicked are deep:*

They encourage themselves in mischief, 5
 they commune among themselves how they may lay snares,
 and say that no man shall see them;
 they devise deeds of iniquity, 6
 even now are they ready with their cunning devices,
 they keep them secret, every man in the deep of his heart;
 but suddenly God shooteth at them with an arrow, 7
 and lo! they are wounded unawares!

III. *but God shall turn their plots against themselves.*

They are confounded, yea their own tongues have made them fall, 8
 and they that had respect unto them flee away;
 so all men that see it shall be afraid, 9
 and shall say, 'this hath God done,'
 for they shall perceive that it is His work:
 the righteous shall rejoice in Jehovah and put their trust in Him, 10
 and all they that are true of heart shall be glad.

§ 46. PSALM LII.

AMONG the many enemies of the faithful in Jerusalem¹, one is conspicuous from his commanding position² and unscrupulous character³. His reckless and confident wickedness brings upon him the stern warning of the Psalmist⁴.

¹ vv. 9, 10.² v. 1.³ v. 3.⁴ vv. 6-8.

This Psalm supplies us with an excellent illustration of the difference between the Prophetical utterances and the Lyric poetry of the Hebrews. The Prophets felt themselves to be and were acknowledged as the enunciators of God's present purpose. As such they addressed the wicked by name and in express terms foretold their punishment. Thus Elijah rebuked Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth; Isaiah passed sentence on Shebna the treasurer¹. Even David was not exempt from a prophetical denunciation of the consequences of his sin. The Lyric poet on the other hand speaks to and for all mankind, and employs an historic fact as the illustration of a general truth. Thus in the 32nd Psalm the object of the poet is not to dwell upon his sin, but to make it the vehicle to convey to the world an eternal truth which had been impressed upon his soul. In the 18th Psalm the history of an entire life is concentrated in a grand metaphor only to inculcate the lesson of the indissoluble connexion between human holiness and divine favour. So again in the Psalm before us the personal invective merely serves to contrast the transitory character of the success of the wicked with the eternal duration of justice and right; but as in the divine justice the recompense of the righteous is the necessary counterpart of the punishment of the wicked, so by a natural train of thought the Psalmist passes at the close of the poem to the special blessings which would be the reward of those who like himself had specially suffered in God's² cause.

I. *The confidence of the wicked;*

Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, thou tyrant,	1
whereas the goodness of God endureth yet daily?	2
thy tongue imagineth destruction	3
like a whetted razor, thou man of guile!	
thou lovest unrighteousness more than goodness,	4
and lying rather than to speak righteousness,	

Ver. 2. *whereas the goodness, i.e.* forgetting that God in His *goodness* is ever watchful to protect his servants and destroy their enemies.

Ver. 3. *razor.* Cp. § 40. cxi. 3; § 45. lxiv. 3; § 52. lvii. 5; § 54. lix. 7.

¹ Isai. xxii. 15—19. Cp. also the condemnation of Pashur by Jeremiah (xx. 1).

² *vv.* 9, 10.

thou lovest all words that may do hurt, 5
O thou false tongue!

II. *yet God shall overthrow him,*

So may God likewise destroy thee for ever, 6
take thee and pluck thee out of thy dwelling,
and root thee out of the land of the living:
the righteous shall see this and fear, 7
and shall laugh him to scorn;
'lo, this is the man, that took not God for his strength, 8
'but trusted unto the multitude of his riches,
'and was proud in his own frowardness!'

III. *while the godly shall continue for ever.*

As for me, I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God, 9
my trust is in the tender mercy of God for ever and ever!
I will always give thanks unto Thee for that Thou hast done, 10
and I will wait on Thy name, for it is lovely,
in the presence of all Thy saints.

Ver. 9. *olive-tree.* In contrast to the ungodly, the Psalmist will flourish like the olive-trees which grew in the precincts of the Temple. Cp. § 105. xcii. 11-13.

§ 47. PSALM XXXVI.

THIS Psalm describes the final consummation of evil in those who act in deliberate hostility to right. In them the voice of conscience is silenced as an oracle of good; it becomes, as it did to Balaam, an oracle of evil, and makes the heart a temple not of God but of Satan¹.

The Psalmist sees that the violence of these persecutors is bent on compassing his banishment². That banishment means more to him than to the worldly citizen, as it would sever him from the Temple of Jehovah. He appeals confidently to God to keep him still under the shield³ of His protection within His holy city and in the enjoyment of the services which he loves⁴. This passionate attachment to the Temple

¹ vv. 1-4.

² v. 11.

³ v. 7.

⁴ v. 8.

is a distinguishing feature of the period which had seen the repulse of the Assyrian Invasion¹.

I. *The ungodly rejoiceth in his misdeeds:*

The voice of evil is deep in the heart of the ungodly, 1
 there is no fear of God before his eyes;
 for it flattereth him in his own sight, 2
 to devise wickedness and to follow hate;
 the words of his mouth are mischief and deceit, 3
 he hath left off to behave himself wisely and to do good;
 he imagineth mischief upon his bed, 4
 and hath set himself in no good way, neither doth he abhor
 anything that is evil!

II. *but God is just, who will protect His own,*

O Jehovah, Thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, 5
 and Thy faithfulness unto the clouds!
 Thy righteousness standeth like the mountains of God, 6
 Thy judgments are like the great deep;
 Thou, O Jehovah, shalt save both man and beast! 7
 how excellent is Thy mercy, O God!
 and the children of men shall flee under the shadow of Thy
 wings;
 they shall be satisfied with the plenteousness of Thy house, 8
 and Thou shalt give them drink of Thy pleasures, as out of a
 river.

Ver. 4. *imagineth mischief on his bed.* Contrast with this the beautiful prayer:

‘Merciful powers!

‘restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature

‘gives way to in repose!’

Macbeth, II. i. 9.

Ver. 6. *mountains of God.* High as the mountains and deep as the sea, *i.e.* infinite, immoveable, and mightier than the mightiest works of creation.

Ver. 7. *mercy—wings.* This metaphor would have a special meaning to one who was for ever in God’s House (ver. 8), where the colossal cherubim, His moving throne, overshadowed the mercy-seat of the ark with the canopy of their wings.

¹ § 35, Introduction.

III. *and overthrow the wicked.*

For with Thee is the well of life, 9
 and in Thy light shall we see light!
 O continue forth Thy lovingkindness unto them that know Thee, 10
 and Thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart;
 O let not the foot of pride come against me, 11
 and let not the hand of the ungodly drive me away!
 there are they fallen, all that work wickedness, 12
 they are cast down, and shall not be able to stand!

Ver. 11. *drive me away, i. e.* from the Temple mentioned in ver. 8.

§ 48. PSALM LIV.

IN the midst of the persecutions of the Heathen¹ the Psalmist finds comfort in uninterrupted worship² at the Temple, and there before the mercy-seat³ and the emblems of God's majesty he feels confident of succour; the present fades away and he sees with the eye of faith the avenging hand of God already dealing out just judgment on his persecutors⁴.

I. *Prayer for help against the heathen.*

Save me, O God, for Thy name's sake, 1
 and avenge me by Thy strength!
 hear my prayer, O God, 2
 and hearken unto the words of my mouth:
 for strangers are risen up against me, 3
 and tyrants which have not God before their eyes,
 seek after my soul.

Ver. 1. *Thy name's sake.* Cp. § 21. xx. 1, 'The name of the God of Jacob defend thee.' Is. iv. 10, 'Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God.'

God's name is not merely His appellation which we utter with our lips, but also and principally the idea we attach to it—His Being and attributes, so far as they are revealed and known.

¹ v. 3.² v. 6.³ v. 7, note.⁴ vv. 4—7.

II. *Triumph of faith.*

Behold, God is my helper, 4
 the Lord is with them that uphold my soul:
 He shall reward evil unto mine enemies; 5
 destroy Thou them in Thy truth!
 I will sacrifice unto Thee with a free heart; 6
 I will praise Thy name, O Jehovah, for It is good;
 for It hath delivered me from all my troubles, 7
 and mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

Ver. 6. *It, i. e.* the name of God.

Ver. 7. *his, i. e.* its.

§ 49. PSALM LXI.

THE comparison of this with the two preceding Psalms is very instructive. The Captivity has already partially begun, and the Psalmist has at last met the fate which he had so earnestly deprecated¹. He is torn from the Temple², but though an exile in a distant land his thoughts are still centred on Jerusalem and its king³, in whose patriotic efforts seems to lie the only hope of return from banishment. The recurrence of so hearty a prayer for the preservation of the king in the next⁴ Psalm shews that the Psalmist can be no longer living under the rule of a Manasseh. The king mentioned must be one who, like Josiah, had thrown himself heart and soul into the cause of Jehovah and His worshippers.

I. *The Psalmist prayeth to God from a distant land,*

Hear my crying, O God, I
 give ear unto my prayer!
 from the ends of the earth do I call upon Thee, 2
 when my heart is faint:
 Thou wilt lead me upon the rock which is too high for me. 3

Ver. 3. *upon the rock, i. e.* over the difficulty which without Thee I could not surmount.

¹ § 47.

² *vv.* 2, 4.

³ *vv.* 6, 7.

⁴ § 50. *lxiii.* 12.

II. *and longeth for the temple,*

Thou wast ever a refuge for me,
 and a strong tower against the enemy ;
 O that I might dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever, 4
 and flee unto the covert of Thy wings !
 for Thou, O God, didst hear my vows, 5
 and gavest me the heritage of them that fear Thy name !

III. *and for the safety of the king.*

Thou wilt grant the king a long life, 6
 and make his years as many generations ;
 may he reign before God for ever ; 7
 prepare Thy lovingkindness and truth that they may pre-
 serve him :
 so will I sing praises unto Thy name for ever, 8
 that I may daily perform my vows.

Ver. 5. *the heritage, i. e.* to dwell in the Holy Land.

Ver. 7. *reign before God, i. e.* not sink into the grave. See § 51. lvi. 13, 'to walk before God in the light of the living.' But the phrase also means 'in the favour of God.' This prayer for the king's life may be compared with § 50. lxiii. 12.'

Ver. 8. *vows*, which were fulfilled by *singing praises* to God.

§ 50. PSALM LXIII.

ALAMENTATION in a foreign land¹, from an exile longing to return to the Temple. He recalls the happiness and splendour of its services, and not unnaturally closes the Psalm with a prayer for the king, with whose well-being the existence of the nation and the Temple is bound up.

I. *The Psalmist in exile longeth to return to the Temple,*

O God, Thou art my God, early do I seek Thee ; 1
 my soul thirsteth for Thee,
 my flesh also longeth after Thee, 2
 in a barren and dry land where no water is :

¹ v. 2.

thus have I seen Thee in the sanctuary, 3
 and beheld Thy power and glory;
 for 'Thy lovingkindness is better than the life itself,' 4
 so did my lips sing in Thy praise :
 thus will I magnify Thee while I live, 5
 and lift up my hands in Thy name :
 my soul is satisfied as it were with marrow and fatness, 6
 and my mouth praiseth Thee with joyful lips,
 when I remember Thee upon my bed, 7
 and think upon Thee in the night-watches !

II. *for God hath been his deliverer.*

Thou verily wast my helper, 8
 and under the shadow of Thy wings do I rejoice ;
 my soul did hang upon Thee, 9
 and Thy right hand did hold me fast :
 as for them that seek my soul to destroy it, 10
 let them sink into the depths of the earth !
 let them be given over to the edge of the sword, 11
 let them be a portion for jackals !

III. *Prayer for the prosperity of the king.*

But may the king rejoice in God ! 12
 let every one that sweareth by him triumph,
 but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped !

Ver. 3. *thus, i.e.* as my God. So also in ver. 5.

Ver. 12. *sweareth by him.* For the custom of swearing by the king's name, see Gen. xlii. 15, 2 Sam. xi. 11. Such an oath was regarded as a proof of loyalty. The prayer here is for the triumph of the loyal over the disaffected, who may during the exile have taken the oath of allegiance to a foreign king by swearing by his name.

§ 51. PSALM LVI.

WE gather from this and the next Psalm that the Psalmist is now a captive in a heathen land, where his firm adherence to the worship of his country and his undisguised confidence in deliverance by the hand of Jehovah had exposed him to the suspicions and perse-

cution of his enemies. This however serves only to deepen his sense of the watchful protection of Jehovah¹ and to arouse within him the spirit of prophecy. He foresees the day when Jehovah will overthrow the tyranny of the heathen² and establish over the earth the kingdom and religion of Israel³.

I. *In the midst of persecution*

Be merciful unto me, O God ! for man goeth about to devour me ; 1
 they are daily fighting and troubling me ;
 mine enemies would daily swallow me up, 2
 for they be many which disdainfully fight against me.
 What time I am afraid, 3
 in Thee do I put my trust :
 through God do I praise His word, 4
 yea, in God do I put my trust and fear not ;
 what shall flesh do unto me ?

II. *the Psalmist trusteth in the providence of God,*

They daily wrest my words, 5
 all that they imagine is to do me evil :
 they stir up strife and lie in wait, they mark my steps, 6
 as though they longed for my life :
 recompense them according to their wickedness, 7
 in Thine anger cast down the peoples, O God !

Ver. 4. This verse describes the office of the prophet ; his highest and essential duty was to proclaim aloud in God's name and by God's inspiration His word, to proclaim this word in its unchangeable truth, to comfort the weak and warn the proud, to make men feel that it and not the wayward passions even of the mightiest ruled the world. This gave the prophet a confidence which no power of man could daunt, and to the Jews the prophet was not so much, according to current ideas, the preacher, as the visible witness and proclaimer of the ultimate triumph of God's cause over all oppressors and wrong. The word here spoken of as *His word*, and in ver. 10 as *the word*, was no written document, but the living consciousness of Jehovah's rule declared by the mouth of His prophets. Cp. § 88. cxxx. 5.

Ver. 5. *wrest*, i. e. they so report and misrepresent his prophetic utterances as to arouse the hostility of the people and expose him to strife. Then they lie in wait for an outburst of popular feeling, or watch for an opportunity of removing him by stealth (ver. 6).

Ver. 7. *the peoples*, i. e. not only my enemies, but the enemies of God everywhere. He invokes the judgment generally expected before the coming of the Messiah. Cp. note on Messianic expectations, § 63. lxxii.

¹ v. 8, § 52. lvii. 11.

² v. 7.

³ Cp. notes § 37. lxxvi. and § 63. lxxii.

Thou countest my sighings, 8
 Thou puttest my tears in Thy bottle—
 are not they noted in Thy book?

III. *for He will deliver him in the time of trouble.*

What time I call upon Thee, then shall mine enemies be put to 9
 flight!

this I know, that God is on my side!
 through God do I praise His word, 10
 through Jehovah do I praise His word:
 yea, in God do I put my trust and fear not; 11
 what shall flesh do unto me?
 unto Thee, O God, do I owe my vows: 12
 unto Thee will I give thanks,
 for Thou hast delivered my life from death, 13
 and my feet from falling,
 that I may walk before God in the light of the living.

Ver. 8. *bottle.* The tears of the suffering godly are treasured by Jehovah as costly unguents and essences are treasured by man. The *bottle* is the leathern bottle of § 130. cxix. 83.

Ver. 13. *light of the living, i. e.* this life. Cp. Job xxxiii. 30, 'Bring his soul from the pit to be enlightened with the life of the living.'

§ 52. PSALM LVII.

THE hopes of restoration, which form the burthen at the end of each division of the Psalm, were the only earthly consolation left to the Israelites at this time, and it would naturally occur to the Psalmist to express them in a poem suited to the wants of his fellow-countrymen in captivity.

I. *Prayer in affliction*

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, 1
 for my soul fleeth unto Thee for refuge,
 yea, under the shadow of Thy wings shall be my refuge,
 until this peril be overpast!

Ver. 1. *Thy wings.* For this exquisite expression of a soul fleeing with tender affection to God, 'which has no parallel in heathen literature' [Perowne], cp. Deut. xxxii. 11, 12, 'As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so Jehovah alone did lead him.'

I will call unto the most high God, 2
 even to God who doeth good unto me,
 that He send from heaven and save me, 3
 and put to shame him that would eat me up,
 yea, that God send forth His mercy and truth! 4
 my soul is among lions, I lie even among ravening men, 5
 with the children of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows,
 and their tongue a sharp sword.
Set up Thyself, O God, above the heavens, 6
and Thy glory above all the earth!

II. *for the restoration of God's kingdom.*

They have laid a net for my feet, 7
 and their own soul is bowed down;
 they have digged a pit before me:
 —and are fallen into the midst of it themselves.
 Mine heart is fixed, O God, mine heart is fixed, 8
 I will sing and give praise!
 awake up, my glory, awake lute and harp! 9
 I myself will awake right early!
 I will give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, among the people, 10
 and I will sing unto Thee among the nations:
 for the greatness of Thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, 11
 and Thy truth unto the clouds!
Set up Thyself, O God, above the heavens, 12
and Thy glory above all the earth!

Ver. 7. *net*. A repetition of the metaphor of lions, ver. 5. *is bowed down*, *i.e.* is in danger of being caught in the net. *pit*. For the metaphor, cp. § 2. vii. 16, § 61. ix. 15, 16, § 70. xxxv. 8.

Ver. 9. *my glory*, *i.e.* my soul, the noblest part of my being. Cp. 'honour,' § 2. vii. 5, note, and the Prayer-Book translation, 'The best member that I have.'

§ 53. PSALM LVIII.

JUDGES were regarded among Eastern nations as the representatives of heaven, and justice was of so sacred a character that the title 'gods'¹ was frequently given to the administrators of it. With corrupt men, however, and in a degraded age, the sanctity of the office served only as a cloak for iniquity and extortion, and we can readily believe that the Israelites in their captivity had little chance of obtaining redress by an appeal to the tribunals of their oppressors. This Psalm is a bitter and indignant outcry against judicial corruption. The Psalmist begins by tauntingly inquiring² if the judges indeed deserve the title of 'gods' which they arrogate to themselves. Then, as though they were silenced by his reproof, he indignantly denounces³ them as the corrupt offspring of a corrupt age, incapable alike by nature and by habit of listening to the promptings of a higher life. Then with the deep faith of a Hebrew in the ultimate triumph of God's cause over all oppression and wrong, he proclaims the day⁴ when the whole company of iniquitous judges shall be rooted out, and justice be firmly established on the earth⁵.

I. *The Psalmist in mockery compareth the titles of the judges with their works,*

Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O ye gods, 1
 and judge uprightly the sons of men,
 while yet ye imagine mischief in your heart, 2
 and weigh out the wickedness of your hands upon the earth?

II. *sheweth their real nature,*

The wicked are froward even from their mother's womb, 3
 as soon as they are born, they go astray and speak lies!

Ver. 1. *O ye gods.* Judges in the East were regarded with especial reverence, as the executors of the will of God. Hence they were frequently called 'gods' in the Bible. Cp. Ex. xxi. 6, where the word rendered 'judges' is really 'gods': see *Hebrew Lyrics* in Supplement. So Luther's version; and compare Ex. xxii. 8. See § 83. lxxxii. 6, Introduction, and note on v. 6.

Ver. 2. *weigh out, i. e.* you pretend to hold the scales of justice in your hand, but you dispense violence instead of justice.

Ver. 3. *froward, i. e.* from-ward, estranged from God and holiness. See Glossary.

¹ Cp. Ex. xxii. 8; Judges v. 8; § 83. lxxxii. 6; John x. 34, 35.

² *v. v.* 2—5.

⁴ *v.* 8.

⁵ Cp. notes § 37. lxxvi. and § 63. lxxii.

² *v.* 1.

they are as venomous as the poison of a serpent, 4
 even like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears,
 which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, 5
 charm he never so wisely!

III. *and calleth on God to destroy them:*

Break their teeth, O God, in their mouths, 6
 smite the jawbones of the lions, O Jehovah!
 when they shoot out their arrows, let them be blunted,
 let them fall away like water that runneth apace,
 let them consume away like wax that melteth, 7
 like the untimely fruit of a woman, which seeth not the sun!

IV. *he foreseeeth their sudden overthrow and the triumph of the righteous.*

Or ever your thorns perceive it, 8
 He will consume the thicket, both green and dry,
 the righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance, 9
 he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly:
 so that a man shall say, 'verily there is a reward for the
 righteous,
 'verily there be gods that judge in the earth!'

Ver. 4. *serpents.* As some dangerous serpents in the East could not be tamed by the arts of the serpent charmer, so do the ungodly shut their ears to the voice of conscience and its admonitions to a holier life. Cp. Jer. viii. 17, 'I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith Jehovah.'

Ver. 5. *lions, i. e. 'ravening men,'* as in § 52. lvii. 5.

Ver. 8. *or ever*; cp. Glossary. *thorns.* The unrighteous judges are likened to *thorns*: before any of them *perceive* that destruction is coming, God shall destroy *the thicket, i. e. the entire company of them.* Cp. § 20. vv. 6, 7, where the wicked are called 'abominable thorns.'

§ 54. PSALM LIX.

A KING is here represented as beleaguered in Jerusalem by a savage foe. In his cry for help his mind is filled with the thought of the old deliverance¹ of the Holy City from the Assyrians, to which allusion was so frequently made in later² writers. The invaders were evidently fierce nomad barbarians, who went out by day to plunder

¹ §§ 35, 36, xlvi, xlviii.

² Zech. xiv; Jer. xxvi. 18, 19; Rev. xx. 9.

and returned to watch by night. Their return in the evening, so terrible at first, fades into insignificance in the Psalmist's mind, when he thinks of the mighty protection of Jehovah; his very language passes into fierce scorn, when he pictures them howling like¹ dogs around the walls, eager to enter in and rend their prey. He implores God not to slay them afar off, but to let them rush on violently to their destruction in sight of all the city.

No invasion of the kingdom of Judah presents any picture like this, except the great invasion of the Scythians. It was the earliest of that long series of movements of wandering hordes, which till the time of Attila periodically burst like a flood over the great mountain barrier of northern barbarism to devastate the plains of civilization below. No mention is made of this invasion in the historical books of Kings and Chronicles; but the simple facts of the invasion, the penetration of these vast masses to the southern frontier of Palestine, their retirement after being bought off by Psammetichus and sacking the temple of Astarte at Ascalon, the permanent trace of their inroad in the name of Scythopolis, 'city of the Scythians,' which was given to the old Canaanitish city of Bethshan on the plain of Esdraelon, are preserved to us in other historical² records; while we gather from more than one passage of the prophets³ who lived in that time a general picture of the terror caused by these strange marauders.

This seething⁴ host of horsemen and bowmen, surging to and fro with its countless bands like the waves of an angry sea, burst over Palestine in the reign of Josiah. The vivid description in the Psalm of their appearance before Jerusalem, 'grinning like dogs and running about the city,' leads us to the supposition that it was written by an eyewitness, while the tone of authority⁵ assumed by the writer would seem to point to no other than to the king himself, as the author of the Psalm.

I. *The Psalmist crieth to God for help against the fury of the invader;*

Deliver me from mine enemies, O God!

I

defend me from them that rise up against me;

¹ Cp. note on v. 6.

² Jer. iv—vi, especially iv. 25—29.

³ Herod. i. 105; Judith iii. 10; 2 Macc. xii. 29.

⁴ Jer. i. 13.

⁵ vv. 9, 16.

O deliver me from the wicked doers, 2
 and save me from the bloodthirsty men!
 for lo, they lie in wait for my life, 3
 violent men conspire against me—
 without any offence or fault of me, O Jehovah!
 they run and prepare themselves without my fault: 4
 arise Thou therefore to help me and behold!
 stand up, Jehovah God of Hosts, Thou God of Israel, 5
 stand up and visit all the heathen,
 and shew not mercy to the treacherous man and the robber!

II. *and setteth forth the threatening danger, and the majesty and mercy of God:*

They shall come back in the evening, 6
 howl like a dog and run about the city!
 behold they will boast aloud with their mouth, 7
 swords are in their lips,
 for, say they, 'who doth hear?'
 but Thou, Jehovah, shalt have them in derision, 8
 Thou shalt laugh all the heathen to scorn!
 upon Thee, O my strength, will I wait! 9
 for Thou art the God of my refuge:
 my God will shew me His kindness plenteously, 10
 God shall let me see my desire upon mine enemies!

Ver. 5. *robbers*. Cp. Jer. iv. 20, 'Suddenly are my tents spoiled;' and 31, 'Zion bewaileth, saying, Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers;' and *vv.* 16, 17, 'Their quiver is as an open sepulchre.' 'They shall eat up thine harvest.'

Ver. 6. *back in the evening, i. e.* to beleaguer the gates. Cp. Jer. iv. 16, 17: 'Watchers come from a far country, and give out their voice against the cities of Judah. As keepers of a field, are they against Jerusalem round about.'

a dog. A writer of the western world, to convey the same idea, would write wolves or hyænas. The dogs of the East, the wild dogs of Jezreel who devoured Jezebel, were savage and hungry animals, wandering about the fields and streets of cities, devouring dead bodies and other offal, and hence were objects of general abhorrence. Cp. 1 Kings xiv. 11, 2 Kings ix. 36. The same idea is conveyed by Jer. v. 6: 'A lion out of the forest shall slay them, a wolf of the deserts (*i. e.* the nomads from the steppes) shall spoil them, a leopard shall watch over their cities: every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces.'

Ver. 7. *boast aloud*. Cp. Jer. vi. 23: 'They are cruel, and have no mercy; their voice roareth like the sea; set in array as men for war against thee, O daughter of Zion.'

III. *he prayeth Him to let the enemy come back, that they may be slain before the city, so that all the people may see it.*

Slay them not, lest my people forget it, 11
 drive them on through Thy might and cast them down,
 O Lord our defence!
 for the sin of their mouth and for the words of their lips,— 12
 O let them be taken in their pride!
 and why? their speaking is of cursing and lies!
 consume them in Thy wrath, consume them that they perish, 13
 that men may know that it is God that ruleth in Jacob and
 unto the ends of the world!
 and let them return in the evening, 14
 howl like a dog and go around the city!
 they will rush violently for their meat, 15
 yea verily they shall be satisfied and fall!

IV. *Praise of God for the deliverance.*

As for me, I will sing of Thy power, 16
 and will praise Thy mercy every morning,
 for Thou hast been my defence
 and refuge in the day of my trouble;
 unto Thee, O my strength, will I sing, 17
 for Thou, O God, art my refuge and my merciful God!

Ver. 11. *slay them not.* We should expect the Psalmist's prayer to have been, 'slay them.' This unexpected turn only marks the intensity of the vengeance; he prays that they may be preserved for an open slaughter before the whole nation assembled on the walls.

Ver. 14. *let them return.* The Psalmist prays for retributive justice. *Let them only come back* to spoil the city, and God shall spoil them.

Ver. 15. *rush violently, i. e.* and in truth they will *rush* greedily to the prey; they will drink the cup to the dregs, which shall prove a cup of vengeance, and be their death.

§ 55. PSALM XXVI.

THIS is a Psalm composed apparently for the Temple service on some special occasion of a general visitation, possibly some plague or sickness.

Such a visitation was regarded by the universal feeling of antiquity

as a punishment for national sin. Amid the panic and despair of the multitude the faithful few were sustained by a sense of their relation to God. The maintenance of this relation had brought them into a close union, the symbol of which was a rigid observance of the Temple services. In this and in the 5th Psalm¹, also composed for the Temple service, the commencing separation between this party and that of the frivolous multitude is distinctly seen. This separation, slight at first, widened afterwards into absolute estrangement. Those who at first had only neglected the Temple came afterwards to actual persecution of the regular worshippers, while these in their turn maintained a distant attitude towards their opponents, which led to the greatest bitterness of feeling.

The Psalm is indeed free from all expression of that spiritual pride which is the especial temptation of religious exclusiveness, but it indicates clearly that the separation had begun. It is the prayer of a man who in the consciousness of his innocence and love of God claims to escape the scourge, which was falling so heavily on the wicked.

I. *The Psalmist testifieth of his integrity,*

Be Thou my judge, O Jehovah! 1
 for I have walked innocently,
 my trust hath been also in Jehovah without wavering!

II.

Examine me, O Jehovah, and prove me, 2
 try out my reins and my heart!
 for Thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes 3
 and I will walk in Thy truth;
 I have not dwelt with vain persons, 4
 neither will I have fellowship with the deceitful.

III.

I hate the congregation of the wicked, 5
 and will not sit among the ungodly;

¹ § 44.

I wash mine hands in innocency, 6
 that so I may go about Thine altar, O Jehovah,
 that I may sing aloud with the voice of thanksgiving, 7
 and tell of all Thy wondrous works!

IV. *claimeth deliverance from the visitation,*

O Jehovah! I love the habitation of Thy house, 8
 and the place where Thy glory dwelleth;
 sweep not away my soul with sinners, 9
 nor my life with the blood-thirsty,
 in whose hands is abominable wickedness 10
 and their right hand is full of bribes!

V. *and abideth in hope.*

But as for me—I will walk innocently; 11
 O deliver me and be merciful unto me!
 my foot standeth in an even place; 12
 I will praise Jehovah in the congregation.

Ver. 6. *go about Thine altar.* According to the Hebrew custom, by which the man who offered sacrifice *went about the altar* singing and giving thanks during the service. Cp. Lev. iii. 2, 8, 13.

§ 56. PSALM XXVIII.

THIS Psalm, composed probably by a king, is similar in tone and language to the preceding, but was written under circumstances of still more urgent danger¹.

The latter portion of the Psalm² appears to have been added when the afflictions described in the former³ portion were past and the prayer for deliverance had been answered.

I. *The Psalmist prayeth to God for deliverance*

Unto Thee, O Jehovah, will I cry, 1
 my rock, be not Thou silent to me,
 lest, if Thou be silent, I become like them that go down to
 the grave:

¹ vv. 1—5.

² vv. 7—10.

³ vv. 1—6.

hear the voice of my humble petitions when I cry unto Thee, 2
 when I hold up my hand towards the mercy-seat of Thy holy
 Temple!

II. *from the common destruction of the wicked.*

Draw me not away with the ungodly and wicked doers, 3
 which speak friendly to their neighbours but imagine mischief
 in their hearts!

reward them after their desert and after the wickedness of their 4
 deeds,
 recompense them after the work of their hands, 5
 pay them that they have deserved!

III.

For they regard not the works of Jehovah, 6
 nor the operation of His hands,
 therefore let Him break them down and not build them up!

The deliverance is granted and he returneth thanks.

Praised be Jehovah, 7
 for He hath heard the voice of my humble petitions!
 Jehovah is my strength and my shield, 8
 my heart hath trusted in Him and I am helped;
 therefore my heart danceth for joy and in my song will I praise
 Him!

O Jehovah, who art their strength 9
 and the saving defence of Thine Anointed,
 O save Thy people and give Thy blessing unto Thine in- 10
 heritance,
 feed them and set them up for ever!

Ver. 2. *hold up, i. e.* in prayer, from the place built for the king (2 Chron. vi. 13) in the Temple, a kind of covered throne (2 Kings xvi. 18) attached to a pillar (2 Kings xi. 14 and xxiii. 3), from which on Sabbath days he surveyed and could address the congregation; it was thence called the Sabbath-throne, the 'covert for the Sabbath,' as distinguished from the other throne from which he gave judgment. *mercy-seat, i. e.* cover of the ark overshadowed by the cherubim.

Ver. 4. *after, i. e.* according to.

Ver. 9. *their, i. e.* of Thy people.

§ 57. PSALM XXXI.

MANY single expressions, as well as the whole tone of quiet resignation, expressed in the tender and plaintive manner peculiar to Jeremiah, point to that Prophet as the author of this Psalm. Like Jeremiah, the Psalmist is persecuted¹ for his fidelity to Jehovah; his cry goes up in the very words of that Prophet²; and the figure of the broken vessel³ is a favourite figure in his prophecies.

To this as to the last Psalm a sequel⁴ has been added, declaring the fulfilment of the Psalmist's prayer.

I. *The Psalmist declareth his confidence in God,*

In Thee, O Jehovah, have I put my trust; let me not be put 1
to confusion for ever;
deliver me in Thy righteousness:
bow down Thine ear to me, make haste to deliver me, 2
and be Thou my strong rock 3
and a house of defence to save me!
for Thou art my strong rock and my castle; 4
Thou wilt also be my guide and lead me for Thy Name's sake,
Thou wilt draw me out of the net that they have laid privily for me, 5
for Thou art my stronghold:
into Thy hands I commend my spirit; 6
for Thou hast redeemed me, Jehovah, Thou God of truth!
Thou hatest them that hold to lying vanities, 7
but as for me, my trust is in Jehovah.

II. *craveth His help in sorrow and suffering,*

Let me be glad and rejoice in Thy mercy, 8
for Thou hast considered my trouble,
and hast known my soul in adversities;
Thou hast not delivered me into the hand of the enemy, 9
but hast set my foot in a large room!

Ver. 7. *lying vanities*, i. e. gods, which are no gods. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 21, Jer. viii. 19, and Jonah ii. 8, in the Supplement.

Ver. 9. *large room*. Cp. § 12. xviii. 19; § 55. xxvi. 12.

¹ vv. 20, 22.

² Cp. v. 15 with Jer. xx. 10 and v. 11 with Jer. xx. 18.

³ v. 14; cp. Jer. xviii. 4, xxii. 28, xxv. 34, xlviii. 38.

⁴ vv. 21—27.

have mercy upon me, O Jehovah! for I am in trouble, 10
 and mine eye is consumed for very heaviness, yea, my soul
 and my body :
 for my life is waxen old with heaviness and my years with 11
 mourning ;
 my strength faileth me because of mine infirmity and my 12
 bones are consumed by reason of my oppressors,
 I became a reproach even to my neighbours and they of 13
 mine acquaintance were afraid of me,
 and they that see me without convey themselves from me ;
 I am clean forgotten as a dead man out of mind, 14
 I am become like a broken vessel.

III. *declareth anew his confidence,*

I have heard the slander of the multitude ; fear was on 15
 every side ;
 while they conspired together against me,
 and took their counsel to take away my life :
 but as for me—my hope hath been in Thee, O Jehovah, 16
 I have said, Thou art my God !
 my times are in Thy hand, 17
 deliver me from the hand of mine enemies and from them
 that persecute me :
 shew Thy servant the light of Thy countenance, 18
 and save me for Thy mercies' sake !
 let me not be confounded, O Jehovah, for I call upon Thee ! 19
 let the ungodly be put to confusion and be put to silence
 in the grave !
 let the lying lips be put to silence, 20
 which cruelly, disdainfully and spitefully speak against the
 righteous !

Ver. 17. *times, i. e.* the vicissitudes of life that time brings with it. Cp. 1 Chron. xxix. 30,
 'With all the times that went over him;' and Is. xxxiii. 6, 'Wisdom and knowledge shall be
 the stability of thy times.'

I. *and rejoiceth in the fulfilment of his prayer.*

O how plentiful is Thy goodness which Thou hast laid up 21
for them that fear Thee,

and that Thou hast prepared for them that put their trust
in Thee,

even before the sons of men;

Thou hidest them in the shelter of Thy presence from the 22
noise of men,

and keepest them in a covered place from the strife of
tongues!

blessed be Jehovah, for He hath shewed me His marvellous 23
great kindness

in the time of oppression and need!

II.

As for me, I said in my trouble, 'I am cast off from the 24
sight of Thine eyes;'

nevertheless Thou heardest the voice of my prayer, 25
when I cried unto Thee.

O love Jehovah, all ye His saints! 26

Jehovah preserveth them that are faithful,

and plenteously rewardeth the proud doer:

be strong and He shall establish your heart, 27

all ye that put your trust in Jehovah!

Ver. 24. *the sight of Thine eyes, i. e. the sunshine of Thy favour.*

§ 58. PSALM LXXXVIII.

THE Israelites looked for the rewards of righteousness in the present world. To the pious an early death was awful not merely as a separation from the pleasurable activity of life, but as a fatal blow to their religious hopes and aspirations. Hence the Psalmist's bitter anguish at this threatening of mortal sickness in his early¹ life. He is

¹ v. 15.

deserted by his friends, and, as it were, dead and out of God's¹ sight. To him there is nothing beyond the grave: as he dwells upon his sufferings, the gloom becomes ever more intense: it is not broken by any ray of hope, such as we usually find even in the most desponding² Psalms. There is no expectation of the triumph of good, or of his own deliverance, or even of the destruction of his present oppressors.

I. *A prelude.*

O Jehovah, God of my salvation, 1
 I have cried day and night before Thee;
 O let my prayer enter into Thy presence,
 incline Thine ear unto my calling!

II. *The Psalmist in his sufferings*

For my soul is full of trouble, 2
 and my life draweth nigh unto the grave:
 I am counted as one of them that go down into the pit, 3
 and I am become even as a man that hath no strength;
 my place is among the dead, 4
 like unto them that are slain and lie in the grave,
 who are out of Thy remembrance,
 and are cut away from Thy hand:
 Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit, 5
 in a place of darkness and in the deep;
 Thine indignation lieth hard upon me, 6
 and Thou hast vexed me with all Thy storms.

III. *prayeth,*

Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me, 7
 and made me to be abhorred of them,
 I am so fast shut in that I cannot get forth: 8

Ver. 3, 5. *pit*, *i. e.* the grave; *deep*, a word usually applied to the sea, here means Sheol, or Hades. Cp. § 65. xvi. 11, note.

Ver. 7. *acquaintance*. Cp. Job xix. 13.

¹ Cp. Job xii. 10.

² Cp. § 26. vi.

my sight faileth me for very trouble ; 9
 O Jehovah, I call daily upon Thee,
 I stretch forth my hands unto Thee ;
 'dost Thou shew wonders among the dead ? 10
 'or shall the dead rise up again and praise Thee ?
 'shall Thy lovingkindness be shewed in the grave ? 11
 'or Thy faithfulness in destruction ?
 'shall Thy wondrous works be known in the dark ? 12
 'and Thy righteousness in the land where all things are
 forgotten ?'

IV. *but cannot attain to comfort.*

But as for me—to Thee, Jehovah, do I cry, 13
 and early shall my prayer come before Thee.
 O Jehovah, why abhorrest Thou my soul, 14
 and hidest Thou Thy face from me ?
 I am in misery and my youth faileth me, 15
 Thy terrors do I suffer, a horrible dread overwhelmeth me ;
 Thy wrathful displeasure is gone over me : 16
 Thy terrors have utterly undone me,
 they came round about me daily like the waterfloods, 17
 and compassed me together on every side !
 my lovers and friends hast Thou put away from me, 18
 mine acquaintance are—they that dwell in the grave !

Ver. 8. *shut in*, *i. e.* not in prison, but in his own abandonment and misery; cp. Lam. iii. 7, 'He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy.' And Job iii. 23, xix. 8.

Ver. 10—12. The words of his prayer.

Ver. 18. *the grave*. Cp. Job xvii. 13, 14.

§ 59. PSALM L.

THE reforms of Josiah had succeeded in establishing the outward worship of Jehovah, but the old evils of idolatry and indifference had been followed by those of formalism and hypocrisy. This was the natural consequence of the establishment of the Book of the Law as a fundamental part of the constitution. Whatever place it may have held among the Jews heretofore, there is no doubt that the finding of the Book of the Law in the Temple gave rise to an increased study of its text: a whole system of commentaries were framed to elucidate its meaning. Wisdom was sought in the knowledge of its letter, and mistaken zeal had turned the 'law'¹ into an object of superstitious reverence and had attached a magical influence to the mere name of the Temple of the Lord².

In a magnificent vision the Prophet, to whom this Psalm is due, beholds the Almighty in the very centre of this misguided worship denouncing a solemn judgment against the degradation of His name and setting forth the requirements of a spiritual religion. The whole scene recalls the great utterance of Amos³; 'I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.'

The Psalmist describeth his vision of judgment.

Jehovah, even the most mighty God, hath spoken and called 1
the world
from the rising up of the sun unto the going down thereof:
out of Sion, the perfection of beauty, 2
hath God shined;—

Ver. 2. *Sion*. Cp. Lam. ii. 15, of Jerusalem: 'Is this the city that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?' Cp. § 36. xlviii. 2.

¹ Jer. viii. 8.

² Jer. vii. 4.

³ v. 21—25.

our God shall come and shall not keep silence! 3
 there went before Him a consuming fire,
 and a mighty tempest was stirred up round about Him.
 He calleth to the heaven above 4
 and to the earth, that He will judge His people;
 gather *My* saints together unto *Me*, 5
 those that have made a covenant with *Me* with sacrifice!
 and the heavens declared His judgment, 6
 how that God Himself doth judge—

I. *God's sentence against the nation;*

Hear, O *My* people, and I will speak, I myself will testify 7
 against thee, O Israel;—
 I am God, even thy God!
 I will not reprove thee, because of thy sacrifices, 8
 for thy burnt-offerings are always before *Me*;
 I will take no bullock out of thine house, 9
 nor he-goat out of thy folds!
 For all the beasts of the forest are *Mine*, 10
 and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills,
 I know all the fowls upon the mountains, 11
 and the wild beasts of the field are in *My* sight;
 if I were hungry, I would not tell thee; 12
 for the whole world is *Mine* and all that is therein!

Ver. 2, 3, 4. For a similar prophetic vision of judgment, cp. Micah i. 1—4: 'The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. For, behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the earth. And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.' Cp. § 2. vii. 6, 7.

Ver. 3. *not keep silence*, i. e. shall proclaim His judgment with thunder and lightning, as at Sinai.

Ver. 6. *heavens declared*. The thunder and lightning are here the preludes to God's sentence, as in Sinai. Cp. Hab. iii. 3—5.

Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls' flesh? 13
 and drink the blood of goats?
 offer unto God thanksgiving, 14
 and pay thy vows unto the Most Highest,
 and call upon Me in the time of trouble, 15
 so will I hear thee and thou shalt praise Me!

II. *against the wicked;*

But unto the ungodly said God: 16
 why dost thou preach My laws,
 and takest My covenant in thy mouth,
 whereas thou hatest to be reformed, 17
 and hast cast My words behind thee?
 when thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him, 18
 and hast been partaker with the adulterers,
 thou hast let thy mouth speak wickedness, 19
 and with thy tongue thou hast set forth deceit,
 thou sittest and speakest against thy brother, 20
 yea, and slanderest thine own mother's son:
 these things hast thou done—and I held My tongue; 21
 and thou thoughtest that I am even such a one as thyself
 but I will reprove thee and set before thee the things that thou
 hast done.

III. *His words of mercy and solemn warning.*

Consider this, ye that forget God, 22
 lest I pluck you away and there be none to deliver you!
 whoso offereth Me thanks and praise, he honoureth Me; 23
 and to him that ordereth his conversation aright,
 will I shew the salvation of God!

Ver. 23. *thanks and praise—conversation.* The two avenues to Divine favour are spiritual service, and a holy life; as the evils rebuked above are two also, lifeless ceremonial (ver. 7—15), and worldly hypocrisy (ver. 16—21). *conversation*, see Glossary.

§ 60. PSALM I.

THIS Psalm strikes the keynote, as it were, of the whole Psalter, the faithfulness of God's dealings with man, and the indissoluble connexion between righteousness¹ and blessing.

Hence it forms so appropriate an introduction to the Psalter that it seems to have been expressly written to stand at the head of some smaller collection of the Psalms² to indicate the train of thought in which they should be read.

It contains indications of a separation between two parties in the kingdom involving the scorn and persecution³ of the righteous; it lays emphasis on the study of the written Law⁴ as a religious duty; it rests its hopes in the thought of a judgment⁵ which shall annihilate the wicked. In all these points it harmonizes with the dominant feelings of the later⁶ period of the Monarchy.

Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the
 ungodly
 nor stood in the way of sinners,
 and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful;
 but his delight is in the law of Jehovah,
 and in His law will he meditate day and night:
 he shall be like a tree planted by the water-side,
 that will bring forth his fruit in due season; his leaf also
 doth not wither,
 and look, whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper.
 As for the ungodly, it is not so with them,
 but they are like the chaff which the wind scattereth.
 Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the judgment, 6
 neither the sinners in the congregation of the righteous :

Ver. 6. *to stand in the judgment* (a legal term), *i. e.* to maintain their cause in the impending judgment of God.

congregation, *i. e.* they shall be winnowed out of the society of the true Israel by the fan of God's judgment. Cp. Ezek. xiii. 9, where the allusion is to false prophets.

¹ Cp. § 4. xxiv. 5, note.

² Cp. App. A. (5).
⁵ vv. 6, 7.

³ v. 1.
⁶ §§ 59, 63.

⁴ v. 2.

for Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous, 7
but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Ver. 7. *knoweth*, i. e. seeth and approveth. Cp. Job xxiii. 10, Nah. i. 7, and § 62. xxxvii. 18.

§§ 61, 62. PSALMS IX, X, XXXVII.

THESE Psalms form a group, the oldest on the acrostic or alphabetical¹ arrangement, and the similarity of style as well as of thought and expression² is so striking as to leave little doubt that they are from one author.

§ 61. PSALMS IX, X,

were composed for the Temple service, in four strophes to be sung by alternate choirs in the name of the people.

The whole forms a thanksgiving for some signal proof of Divine vengeance on one of the great Empires of the world. As Jerusalem was still³ undestroyed, the allusion is probably to the Assyrian Empire, which finally perished with the destruction of Nineveh, A.C. 606; and the cities mentioned in the Psalm⁴ would, on this hypothesis, be the

¹ *Note on the Alphabetical structure.* There are in the Psalter nine Psalms [§ 61. ix, x.; § 62. xxxvii.; §§ 77, 78. xxv, xxxiv.; § 130. cxix.; §§ 135, 136. cxi, cxii.; § 147. cxlv.] on the acrostic or alphabetical arrangement; the most elaborate specimen is the 119th Psalm (see § 130, Introduction). Each letter of the alphabet in order forms the initial letter of consecutive verses. In most cases each letter is once employed; in the 3rd chapter of Lamentations each letter forms the beginning of three, and in the 119th Psalm of eight consecutive verses. Such an arrangement is constrained and artificial, adapted for didactic rather than for lyrical expression; but it is an aid to memory, and was employed as a vehicle for lamentations or consolations addressed to others; or for purposes of private devotion, to express confidence in the watchful protection of Jehovah (§ 77 : to dwell on His attributes (§ 147); and to meditate lovingly on every aspect and title of His written Law (§ 130). In the present Psalm the alphabetical structure is incomplete, as it also is in the last chapter of Lamentations; see Hebrew Lyrics in the Supplement.

² For similarity of expression the first part of the 17th verse of the 10th Psalm may be compared to the same verse in the 37th; and the 2nd part of the same verse in the 10th to the 10th verse and to the 2nd part of the 37th verse of the 37th Psalm.

³ ix. 14.

⁴ v. 6.

cities of which Nineveh was composed. The wish expressed towards the end¹ of the Psalm, that the heathen may be driven out from the land, is rendered intelligible by the partial subjugation of Judæa by the Egyptians which happened at this time; and the prevalent tone of frivolity in the nation, so constantly alluded to in the contemporary Prophets, is here strikingly depicted by the citation of an older Psalm². Great emphasis is given to this part of the subject by the interruption of the alphabetical arrangement, and by the resumption of it³ when the picture is complete.

The interruption at this point, which has probably led to the separation of the Psalm into two parts, may be ascribed to the fact that the Psalmist, while dwelling upon the frivolity of the nation, found the ideas he wished to express already embodied in an older Psalm and omitted so many of the initial letters as would allow for the insertion of these verses. The original arrangement as one Psalm has been preserved in the Septuagint.

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM.

I. [Ps. ix.] *Thanksgiving for a great deliverance and a revelation of the divine mercy.*

All my heart shall praise Thee, O Jehovah, 1
 I will speak of all Thy marvellous works,
 I will be glad and rejoice in Thee, 2
 yea, my songs will I make of Thy name, O Thou most
 Highest!
Because mine enemies are driven back, 3
 and fall and perish at Thy presence;
 for thou hast maintained my right and my cause, 4
 Thou art set on the throne that judgest right!
Confounded are the heathen and the ungodly are destroyed, 5
 Thou hast put out their name for ever and ever;

¹ x. 18.

² x. 1—12.

³ x. 13.

as for the enemy,—he is laid waste in perpetual ruin; 6
 yea, the cities which Thou hast destroyed—their memorial is
 perished with them:
 but Jehovah reigneth a King for ever, 7
 He hath also prepared His seat for judgment;
 and He will judge the world in righteousness, 8
 and minister true judgment unto the people;
Great defence shall Jehovah be to the oppressed, 9
 even a refuge in time of drought and trouble,
 and they that know Thy name shall put their trust in Thee, 10
 for Thou, Jehovah, hast never failed them that seek Thee!

II. *Prayer for Jehovah's help against internal troubles;*

High praise to Jehovah who dwelleth in Sion, 11
 shew the people of His doings;
 for He that maketh inquisition for blood hath remembered 12
 them,
 and hath not forgotten the complaint of the poor:
In mercy, O Jehovah, consider the trouble which I have suffered 13
 from them that hate me,
 Thou that liftedst me up from the gates of death,
 that I may shew forth all Thy praise; 14
 within the gates of the daughter of Sion will I rejoice at Thy
 salvation!
Justly are the heathen sunk in the pit which they made, 15
 in the same net which they hid privily is their own foot taken;
 Jehovah shewed Himself, He hath executed judgment, 16
 the ungodly is trapped in the work of his own hands.
Know thou that the ungodly shall return to the grave, 17
 yea, the heathen, and all that forget God;
 for the poor shall not alway be forgotten, 18
 the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever!

Ps. ix. 12. *them*, *i. e.* the unjustly slain; *poor*, *i. e.* afflicted. Cp. § 29. xii. 1, note.

Ver. 18. *poor*. Cp. ver. 12. See Glossary.

Up, Jehovah! let not man have the upper hand, 19
 the heathen shall be judged in Thy sight!
 put them in fear, O Jehovah! 20
 let the heathen know themselves to be but men!

III. [Ps. x.] *a more detailed description of these troubles;*

Why standest Thou so far off, O Jehovah? 1
 and hidest Thy face in the needful time of trouble?
 the wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor, 2
 they are taken in the devices he hath imagined;
 the ungodly maketh boast of his own heart's desire, 3
 the covetous man forsaketh and despiseth Jehovah.
 The ungodly hath a high look, and saith: 'HE heedeth not, 4
 'there is no God'—this is his thought continually
 his way doth always prosper, 5
 Thy judgments are far above out of his sight,
 as for his enemies, he defieth them,
 and in his heart he saith, 'tush, I shall never be cast down, 6
 there shall no harm happen unto me.'
 His mouth is full of cursing, deceit and fraud, 7
 under his tongue is mischief and destruction;
 he sitteth in the lurking-places of the villages, 8
 yea, privily in his lurking dens doth he slay the innocent;
 his eyes are privily set against the poor, 9
 he lieth waiting secretly as a lion in his lair!

Ps. x. 3. *his own heart's desire*, i. e. he worships no God, but his own heart's ambition.
 Cp. Habakkuk i. 11—16, 'Then shall his mind change and he shall pass over and offend,
 imputing this his power unto his god....Therefore they sacrifice unto their net and burn
 incense unto their drag, because by them their portion is fat and their meat plenteous.' The
heart's desire in both passages being the same: in the Psalm, of the wicked persecuting the
 poor, ver. 2; in the Prophet, of the Chaldæans slaying the nations.

Ver. 5. *far above*, i. e. God's judgments are so remote that he careth not for them. Cp.
 Job xxii. 13: 'And thou sayest, How doth God know? can He judge through the dark cloud?'

Ver. 8. *villages*; away from towns, where they might exercise their robberies unobserved.

Yea, he lurketh to ravish the poor,
 he doth ravish the poor and getteth him into his net; 10
 he croucheth, he lieth down,— 11
 and the poor do fall into his jaws;
 for he saith in his heart, ‘tush, God hath forgotten, 12
 ‘He hideth His face; He will never see it!’

IV. *renewed prayer to Jehovah to effect a final deliverance from them.*

Up, Jehovah! O God, lift up Thine hand, 13
 forget not the poor!
 wherefore should the wicked condemn God, 14
 while he doth say in his heart, ‘tush! Thou carest not for it’?
 Verily Thou hast seen it! for Thou beholdest mischief and wrong, 15
 to grave them on Thy hands; 16
 the poor committeth himself to Thee;
 Thou art always the helper of the fatherless.
 Wilt not Thou break the arm of the ungodly? 17
 yea, Thou shalt seek his works and they shall not be found.
 Jehovah is King for ever and ever, 18
 let the heathen perish out of His land!
 Zealously hast Thou defended the cause of the poor, O Jehovah! 19
 Thou wilt establish their heart; Thine ear hearkeneth thereto,
 to help the fatherless and poor unto their right, 20
 that the men of the earth be no more exalted against Thee!

Ver. 16. *to grave them, i.e.* so that they may be ever before Thee, and remembered for punishment. Cp. Is. xlix. 15, 16, ‘Yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands.’ Cp. also Deut. xxxii. 34, 35.

Ver. 17. *his works, i.e.* Thou shalt efface the results of his misdeeds, so that no trace remains even to the searching eye of God. Cp. § 62. xxxvii. 10.

§ 62. PSALM XXXVII.

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM¹.

THE sure connexion between wickedness and punishment was a lesson, which was impressed upon the men of that age by the destruction of unrighteous empires and the fall of tyrants: particularly

¹ Cp. § 61, note, and § 130. cxix.

by the fall of Nineveh¹. It is here set forth by the Psalmist, with all the weight of age and experience, in a Psalm composed mainly of quotations² from other books, with a burden of practical admonition, not to envy the present prosperity of the wicked but rather to wait in patient resignation for the just judgments of God.

I. *The righteous exhorted to disregard the prosperity of the wicked;*

Against the ungodly fret not thyself, 1
 neither be thou envious against the evil doers;
 for they shall soon be cut down like the grass, 2
 and be withered even as the green herb.
Be doing good and put thy trust in the Lord; 3
 dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed;
 delight thou in Jehovah, 4
 and He shall give thee thy heart's desire!
Commit thy ways unto Jehovah, 5
 put thy trust in Him and He shall bring it to pass,
 He shall make thy righteousness as clear as the light, 6
 and thy cause as clear as the noonday!
Dwell thou in Jehovah, wait patiently for Him, 7
 and grieve not thyself at him whose way doth prosper,
 against the man that doeth after evil counsels.
Eschew wrath and let go displeasure, 8
 and fret not thyself, else shalt thou be moved to do evil:
 wicked doers shall be rooted out, 9
 and they that patiently abide in God, these shall inherit the
 land.
For—yet a little while,—and the ungodly shall be clean gone; 10
 thou shalt look after his place, and he shall be away!
 but the meekspirited shall possess the earth, 11
 and shall be refreshed in the multitude of peace.

Ver. 10. *clean gone*. Cp. § 61. x. 17 and note.

¹ Cp. § 61, Introduction.

² Cp. v. 1 with Prov. xxiv. 19; v. 4 with Job xxvii. 10; v. 6 with Job xi. 17; v. 10 and 35 with Job viii. 18; v. 13 with § 16, ii. 4; v. 16 with Prov. xv. 16; v. 23 with Prov. xx. 24.

II. for it is but for a time;

- Go** to, ye that seek counsel against the just, 12
 and gnash upon him with your teeth;
 the Lord shall laugh you to scorn, 13
 for He hath seen that your day is coming.
- Hath** the ungodly drawn his sword and bent his bow, 14
 to cast down the poor and needy and to slay the upright?
 his sword shall go through his own heart, 15
 and his bow shall be broken.
- Is** not a small thing that the righteous hath 16
 better than great riches of the ungodly?
 for the arms of the ungodly shall be broken, 17
 but Jehovah upholdeth the righteous.
- Jehovah** knoweth the days of the godly, 18
 and their inheritance shall endure for ever;
 they shall not be ashamed in the perilous time, 19
 and in the days of dearth they shall have enough.
- Know** that the ungodly shall perish, 20
 and the enemies of Jehovah are as the flower of the field,
 they shall consume—yea, even in smoke shall they consume
 away!

III. while the righteous have the abiding protection of God.

- Lo!** the ungodly borroweth and payeth not again, 21
 but the righteous is merciful and liberal;
 such as are blessed of God shall possess the land, 22
 and they that are cursed of Him shall be rooted out.
- Moreover** Jehovah ordereth a good man's going, 23
 and hath pleasure in his way;
 though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, 24
 for Jehovah upholdeth him with His hand.
- Never**, though I have been young and now am old, 25
 have I seen the righteous forsaken and his seed begging
 their bread;

- the righteous is ever merciful and lendeth,
and his seed is blessed. 26
- O**h, flee from evil and do the thing that is good,
and so thou shalt dwell for evermore;
for Jehovah loveth the thing that is right,
He forsaketh not His saints. 27 28
- P**unishment awaiteth the unrighteous;
as for the seed of the ungodly, it shall be rooted out;
the righteous shall inherit the land,
and dwell therein for ever. 29 30
- R**ighteousness uttereth wisdom with her lips,
and the tongue of the righteous speaketh judgment;
the law of his God is in his heart,
and his goings shall not slide! 31 32
- S**ee, how the wicked lieth in wait for the righteous,
and seeketh occasion to slay him;
but Jehovah will not leave him in his hand,
nor condemn him when he is judged. 33 34
- T**rust thou in Jehovah and keep His way,
and He shall promote thee to inherit the land,
when the ungodly shall perish, thou shalt see it. 35
- U**ngodly men have I seen in great power,
and flourishing like a green bay tree;
yet he passed away and lo, he was gone;
I sought him, but his place could nowhere be found. 36 37
- V**iew the perfect man and behold the upright,
how the man of peace hath prosperity;
but as for transgressors, they shall perish together,
the posterity of the wicked shall be rooted out. 38 39
- Y**ea, the salvation of the righteous cometh of Jehovah;
He is their strength in the time of trouble;
Jehovah standeth by and delivereth them,
He delivereth them from the ungodly and saveth them,
because they put their trust in Him. 40 41

§ 63. PSALM LXXII.

THIS Psalm is a prayer for blessing on a king who has just ascended the throne. It is evidently some later king—Josiah, for example, or one later still, for the prayer throughout is that the diminished and impoverished kingdom of David may be restored to its former greatness and position in the world.

The Psalmist gives utterance to their hopes of a great deliverer—a Messiah or anointed king—who should restore the kingdom to Israel¹. These hopes had long been cherished in the hearts of the people; great prophets gave them continual utterance; and the accession of a king—especially of a king of youth and promise—could not fail to rekindle them.

It is not to the sword, but to a wise and understanding heart, that the Psalmist looks for deliverance. He prays that the king may be animated by the spirit which dictated Solomon's choice to discern between good and evil². The only solid foundation for national prosperity is a just administration: internal justice, external power and prosperity, would go hand in hand; strangers would flock with a tribute of admiration and homage to such a people, and to such a king³; and in this union of inward and outward blessing the earth would be renovated in a new youth.

Many expressions in the Psalm remind us forcibly of the last words of David⁴, in which he depicted the ideal of a king, and there is no doubt that it was the remembrance of what David had actually achieved which kept those hopes alive in the hearts of the Israelites. Such hopes are however too grand to be fulfilled by an earthly monarch, and the Psalm naturally passes at the close into a prayer to God, the only source of strength, and the only author of true deliverance.

¹ Cp. note § 37. lxxvi. and note.
³ *vv.* 8—15.

² 1 Kings iii. 9 and 28.
⁴ § 20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—7.

1. *Prayer for the prosperity of the king,*

Give the king Thy judgments, O God! 1
 and Thy righteousness unto the king's son;
 then shall he judge Thy people with equity, 2
 and Thy poor according unto right;
 the mountains also shall bring blessing to the people, 3
 and the little hills, through righteousness!
 let him keep the suffering folk by their right, 4
 let him defend the children of the poor,
 and the oppressor let him utterly destroy!
 * * * * *

then shall they fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endureth, 5
 from one generation to another!
 let it come down like the rain upon the mown field, 6
 even as drops of rain that water the earth;
 in his time let the righteous flourish, 7
 yea, and abundance of peace, so long as the moon endureth.

II. *for the restoration of his dominion, for he is the protector of the oppressed.*

Let his dominion be also from sea to sea, 8
 and from the river even unto the world's end;

Ver. 1. *Thy judgments*, i. e. the decisions which the king would be called on to make in his character of judge. The Psalmist prays that these may be in accordance with the will of God. For the meaning of righteousness and the understanding heart, see Solomon's prayer, 1 Kings iii, 9.

Ver. 3. *mountains—righteousness*. Cp. Isaiah xxxii. 16, 17: 'Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the fruitful field: and the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.'

After ver. 4 one verse of two lines is wanting to complete the sense and the structure of the stanza. Ewald believes that the sense of ver. 1 is repeated; and that the missing link may be supplied by words like,

'give the king Thy judgments, O God!
 and cover him with Thy righteousness.'

Ver. 6. *it*, i. e. God's righteousness imparted to the king. Cp. ver. 1, note.

Ver. 8. *sea to sea*, i. e. from the Arabian Gulf on the South-East to the Great or Mediterranean sea on the North-West; and again from the river Euphrates on the North-East to the wildernesses on the South-West of Canaan, the *world's end*. This describes the boundaries of the Davidic empire.

let them that dwell in the wilderness kneel before him, 9
 and let his enemies lick the dust;
 let the kings of Tarshish and of the isles give presents, 10
 let the kings of Arabia and Saba bring gifts,
 yea, let all kings fall down before him, 11
 let all nations do him service!
 for he delivereth the poor when he crieth, 12
 the needy also that hath no helper,
 he is favourable to the simple and needy, 13
 and preserveth the souls of the poor—
 he delivereth their souls from oppression and wrong, 14
 and dear is their blood in his sight—
 so that they may flourish and give unto him of the gold of Arabia, 15
 and make prayer for him without ceasing,
 and praise him every day.

III. *Repetition of prayer for universal and everlasting dominion.*

Let there be an heap of corn in the land high upon the hills! 16
 let his fruit be high as the hill of Libanus,
 and let people spring up in the city as grass upon the earth!
 let his name endure for ever, 17
 as long as the sun endureth, let his name increase;
 and let all the peoples be blessed through him,
 yea, let all the peoples praise him!

Ver. 16. *his fruit, i. e.* let the posterity of the king be numerous and strong, as a heap of corn piled high as mount Lebanon. Cp. § 22. xxi. 10.

Ver. 17. *for ever.* Cp. § 10. cx. 4.

Note. For the omission of two verses which are added at the end of the Psalm in the Authorized Version, see Appendix A (4). Cp. § 29. xli. note.

NOTE ON THE HISTORY OF MESSIANIC EXPECTATIONS DURING
THE PERIOD OF THE PSALTER.

GOD'S revelation of a Messiah, like His other revelations, was gradual and may not unfitly be described as a growth. Up to the time of the first period of decadence after the reign of David, the several stages of revelation may be looked upon as a preparation, as it were,

of the soil, on which the further revelation of a Messiah to come, preceded by judgment, was to be planted and to bear fruit. The call of Abraham,—the setting apart the Jewish nation from the rest of the world,—their belief in One invisible ruler of the universe, One just and holy God as their God,—their acceptance of an order of men who should rule as His vicegerents, were all necessary steps in the order of divine providence to the further revelation of a Messiah; they were periods, so to speak, of that ‘fulness of time,’ which was not complete till an era later than the Psalter and therefore excluded by the historical character of this work from present consideration.

The origin of this hope has been already¹ spoken of as to be sought in the great revelation of the Old Testament, namely, the revelation of one God and the capability of spiritual life which ensued to the Jewish nation from this belief.

The doctrine that God is One and that God is a Spirit had been maintained as a philosophical tenet before; but here was a whole nation carrying this belief into its daily life, into every kind of society, into all sorts of occupations; this belief was the centre and keystone of their national existence; the highest spirits of the nation were its living witnesses; and it was this belief which made them the fittest instrument for the conversion of the world. In spite of the heathen tendencies of Solomon’s reign, which after the secession of Jeroboam had their abiding stronghold in the northern kingdom and were not without adherents in the south, there never were wanting knees which had not bowed to Baal. The champions of this belief were ‘the goodly fellowship of the Prophets,’ those chosen heroes in the cause of divine truth, into whose hearts God had breathed a fuller measure of His Spirit, that they might make that Spirit known to their fellow men. From this belief, supported, not by arguments which always provoke the thought of counter-arguments, but by the unconscious evidence of their lives, came a spiritual atmosphere fit for new converts to breathe; from this belief came forms of language and expression fit for new converts to use; on it were based those everlasting truths, those ‘thoughts of God,’ which unshaken amid the surgings of human passion and caprice have ruled the world.

¹ Cp. note on the origin of Messianic Expectations, § 37. lxxvi.

Of such truths the two most prominent are the immortality of the soul and the hope of a great deliverer coming to execute judgment, to reign in righteousness and to gather up all the world without distinction of race into one kingdom.

How the Jews gained the first glimpse of immortality will be seen in a remarkable group of Psalms of this period¹; it is the object of this note to trace the growth of the Messianic hope from its first dim revelation in the time after David to its meridian splendour in the prophecies of the 2d Isaiah, or as he has been well called, the 'Evangelical Prophet.'

Kings like Asa and Jehoshaphat were utterly powerless to raise the kingdom of Judah from the depth to which it had fallen. Overshadowed by the powerful kingdom of Israel under the rule of the house of Omri as a neighbour and rival,—scarcely able to maintain its very existence against the nations which were once its vassals,—and yet conscious of its high calling as the home of the pure religion of Jehovah, this little kingdom could never forget the glories of its history under Moses and under David. The very blows which had broken its human pride kept awake this heavenly consciousness; and the very impossibility of recovering the lost dominion roused the nobler spirits of the nation to grasp in living faith and hope the spiritual and abiding element of David's kingdom, which made him, for them as for us, the type of the Messiah.

Thus the very humiliation which was so fatal to the earthly expectations of the Jews, was in the order of God's providence the means by which their minds were opened to receive the first revelation of a great deliverer,—an anointed one, for that is the meaning of the Hebrew word Messiah,—who should judge the world and restore the kingdom to Israel. The basis of this national expectation and its connexion with David is to be found in the promise, imparted to him by Nathan², that even after his death God would establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. In each successive period of affliction the expectations became more pure from earthly dross, and faith in the promise more deeply rooted. So early as in Solomon's reign, when the division of the kingdom was impending and no prospect was before them save of dissolution and ruin, Ahijah the Shi-

¹ §§ 64—66. xvii, xvi, xlix, and Introduction.

² 2 Sam. vii. 12, 13.

Ionite in his very prediction of that dissolution, expressly reserved the rights of David's house to the fulfilment of the promise¹.

The hope in this early time was limited to the assurance, that God would fulfil His promise. There is no trace of its being connected with any man, still less with one particular man, as it was in the later time of Isaiah. It only recognised the truth that although men of that age were unequal to the task, God Himself would surely accomplish it; that He, as was said by Joel, would come in a great and terrible day of judgment to put an end to the iniquity of the earth, and would pour out abundantly of His Spirit upon His people². Thus was the kingdom to be re-established; and when the war which was to restore David's house should end in an era of peace and prosperity, prophet and psalmist pictured to themselves all nations of the earth going as pilgrims to Jerusalem to learn the exceeding blessedness of the religion of Jehovah.

In the prophets, who follow Joel, a step is gained in the catholicity of the revelation. From Hosea, the tenderest expounder of the love, with which God will regard His people, when His judgments shall have purified their souls, we learn that it is not only the heathen but the chosen people, and the chosen people especially, who are to be purified through judgment; while from the 2nd Isaiah we further learn, that it is not the chosen people only but the Gentiles also, who are to be included in the Messianic kingdom.

As time advanced, the revelation of this kingdom became clearer and more spiritual. Each successive Prophet adds new features to the picture painted by his predecessor. What is spiritual abides. There was a growing feeling of the essential identity of the dominion of Israel and the dominion of the religion of Jehovah. What David had gained by the sword,—which seemed at his time to be the foundation of an universal empire,—was within a few years of Solomon's death lost by the sword; and no efforts which were made by the kings of Judah to recover this dominion were successful. It might be by other means than by the sword that the dominion of Jehovah was to be re-established. For it was no harshness or injustice on the part of the Jews, which drove such outlying kingdoms as Moab and Edom into rebellion; it was the love of a wild and dissolute life³,

¹ 1 Kings xi. 36, 39.

² Joel passim and especially ii. 28—32.

³ Cp. § 16. ii. Introduction.

which they were unwilling to forfeit by union with a nation bound by the religion and worship of Jehovah. Thus the contest was felt to be not so much between the tribe of Judah and the surrounding tribes as between the worshippers of Jehovah and the heathen; and while a recovery of these dominions is still spoken of, the idea of war fades more and more from the description.

It was probably this conviction of the uselessness of war which at an earlier period led king Jehoshaphat to give up all attempts to subdue by force of arms the northern kingdom, and even to confirm the peace by a marriage between his son Joram and the daughter of the house of Ahab.

Later, when the northern kingdom had passed away and Sion remained unmoved as a rock amid the storms which swept over the land, the hopes and aspirations of Jehovah's people, thus mightily delivered, burned up more brightly than ever. It was no longer a merely general hope and belief, that Jehovah would somehow re-establish His kingdom; but that a man, a royal deliverer, should come as Jehovah's vicegerent to rule in righteousness and to restore the ancient boundaries of the kingdom which David had won. It is in the older Zechariah¹ that we find for the first time this idea of a personal Messiah. Sion is to expect a king, who should rule from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth; while in the two southern prophets, Isaiah and Micah, the two ideas, of individual judgment and of the redemption by a great prince of the house of David, came out in bold relief. It is in Micah, the foreteller of the fall of Jerusalem², that we find in its full intensity the idea of the future supremacy of the chosen people.

But it is through Isaiah that the truth in this more definite form was finally revealed. Himself of royal lineage and endowed with the highest gifts of prophetic utterances, he was chosen to pourtray the image of this great king and to announce the certainty of his coming. The nation had drunk to the dregs the cup of misery, the penalty of misrule. Misrule they had experienced in all its varied forms; and none even of the best kings had set before them the establishment of God's kingdom as the one sole end of national endeavour. Isaiah now proclaimed the true ideal of a king, and held up this glorious

¹ c. ix—xi. of the A. V.

² iii. 12.

image, the embodiment of prophetic aspiration, alike for the comfort of the pious and despairing people as for the reproof of the degenerate king¹ and court; nay more, he proclaimed it in yet fuller and more fervid language when Sennacherib threatened Jehovah's people with annihilation. Then for the first time was the glorified vision of Jehovah's kingdom brought face to face with the barbaric might of heathen power; then the prophet of God stood calm and undismayed against the furious threats of the self-styled king of kings².

It seems that different prophets looked at different times to different kings for the fulfilment in their persons of these Messianic hopes. Isaiah, in the reign of Ahaz³, looked to the young prince Hezekiah as the great deliverer; at the period of the captivity, the second Isaiah was the first to foretell the conversion of the Gentiles and to describe, in language which has gained for him the title of the Evangelical Prophet, the true character of the Messiah, at once the representative and redeemer of God's servant Israel. He seems for a moment to glance at Cyrus⁴, as the anointed who should deliver Israel by smiting its captor, and should be not only the deliverer and benefactor of Israel, but the inaugurator of a reign of righteousness and truth. Haggai and the second Zechariah certainly saw the Messiah in Zerubbabel, 'the Branch, who should bear the glory and should sit and rule upon His throne; and he shall be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both⁵.'

But from these side-glances at persons who at most were partial and temporary fulfilments, if we pass to the grand picture made up by the successive touches of the whole 'fellowship of the Prophets,' we find the idea of the Messiah expanded at last into the whole Jewish nation⁶, 'mine elect, my servant Israel.' The nation was to redeem and deliver the Gentiles, not by the sword of the conqueror but by the spiritual weapons of suffering; and consequently no one person could fulfil this glorified idea of the Messiah, unless he could be considered as in himself the one representative of the whole people.

Thus it was in this darkest and dreariest period of the Jewish

¹ Ahaz. Cp. Dean Milman's *Hist. of the Jews*, i. 372.

² Cp. §§ 35—39, Psalms celebrating the repulse of the Assyrian invasion.

³ Is. vii, ix.

⁴ Is. xlv. 28; xlv. i.

⁵ *both, i. e.* Zerubbabel and Jeshua.

⁶ Cp. § 124. lxxxix. 37—50 and Introduction.

history that the hopes of a great deliverer shone most brightly through the gloom. These hopes found their perfect expression in the most magnificent chapters of all Hebrew prophecy¹, which open with the key-note, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people,'—the note of a revived and glorified Israel,—and unfold the vision of a new world of love and justice, which was to gather up into one kingdom not only the seed of David but the whole human race².

Such are the various forms of Messianic hope, which between the time of Rehoboam and Nehemiah more or less powerfully swayed the Jewish mind; the allusions to the same subject in the Psalms, which are in many cases lyrical embodiments of those feelings, naturally present less of detail, though as might be expected in lyric poetry they are characterised by fully as great a depth of feeling.

¹ Is. xl—lxvi.

² Is. xlix! 1, 6, 12, 22, 23; lx. 1—22; lxi. 1—11.

BOOK III.

*PSALMS FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
KINGDOM TO THE RETURN FROM CAP-
TIVITY.*

BOOK III.

PSALMS FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE KINGDOM TO THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY.

SOME of the grandest and most spiritual Psalms are the outcome of the captivity; and though their language bears frequent and indelible marks of the depression¹ and humiliation which had befallen the people, yet we find amid the gloom flashes of the noblest thought and of the highest spiritual truth.

Amidst such universal misery, it is no wonder, if in some Psalms the general tone of resignation is lost, nay, if in some it passes for a moment into fierce and terrible² imprecation. For what words can describe the agony of a captivity, which was to Israel the rending away of higher hopes and deeper affections than any nation had yet been able to cherish or to feel? To the harrowing bitterness of persecution, with which they had long been vexed, are added troubles peculiar to the time, contempt for the sufferings of the persecuted and woe-stricken followers of Jehovah, contempt for the majesty of Jehovah Himself, as the God who

¹ Cp. § 64. xvii; § 71. xxxviii; § 75. li; § 73. lxix; § 74. cix.

² § 70. xxxv; § 73. lxix; § 74. cix.

could neither hear nor help ; and worse than all, separation from His visible presence, from that Temple, which had hitherto been the centre of light and warmth in the darkest days of trouble from scoffers within and from enemies without.

But it seems as though it were this very separation from their beloved land, from the security and bliss afforded by their Temple, which could alone open their eyes to the truth, that spiritual¹ life and happiness in God must be looked for in other things than in ceremonial worship and sacrifice. Fainter traces of the same truth were to be found in earlier² times ; but not until the old religion had passed through this valley of the shadow of death, did its spiritual power and truth shine forth with a glorious and unclouded light. All outward and visible help, in which they had heretofore trusted, was irrevocably gone ; and by this ordeal³ hope and trust and resignation are not quenched, but purified and strengthened ; in their deep distress they recognise the length and breadth of their old follies and sins, and so become capable of a new and spiritual birth. The old Israel from its sorrows and its death rises again to a new life, and with prophetic assurance that the victory of the heathen was but for a time, looks forward in the midst of its suffering to a new and a sure deliverance⁴.

¹ § 65. xvi ; § 72. xl ; § 75. li ; § 73. lxix.

³ § 51. lvi ; § 52. lvii ; § 69. xxii.

² § 59. l.

⁴ § 83. lxxxii ; § 84. xiv ; § 85. cxx. &c.

BOOK III. [SECTIONS 64—89.]

*PSALMS FROM THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
KINGDOM TO THE RETURN FROM CAP-
TIVITY.*

§§ 64—66. PSALMS XVII, XVI, XLIX.

WE have here a group of Psalms, which express, faintly at first but with increasing certainty, the feeling now beginning to dawn upon the Hebrew mind, that though the flesh and its glory perish, there is life for the soul with God.

There is in them a remarkable similarity alike of language and of sentiments, which points to their being the work of one author. We find in them a contrast drawn between God and the world¹, between the aims of the righteous and of the worldly²; a deep care and watchfulness over the soul's health, which courts rather than avoids the scrutinising eye of God³; and, mingled with these more plaintive notes, outbursts of joy at the contemplation of the future⁴.

We read in them the thoughts of one who is face to face with the great problem of the time, the prosperity of the wicked. This is the riddle, 'the dark speech,' which he is prepared to make known upon his harp⁵; and in the first⁶ of these psalms we witness the commencing struggles of heart to understand the problem, of which we find the solution in the third.

Assuredly no more momentous struggle ever swayed the heart of man than that which first led him to suspect himself to be immortal. The early Jews, even Moses⁷ and most of the Psalmists⁸, limit their view to the present life: even of David we find nothing to indicate that he dwelt upon any thought beyond it; indeed, as in his consciousness

¹ xvii. 14. ² xvii. 2—5; xvi. 2—5; xlix. 5, &c.

³ xvii. 2; xvi. 7, 8.

⁴ xvii. 16; xvi. 10—12; xlix. 16. ⁵ xlix. 4.

⁶ xvii.

⁷ So the Sadducees, the strict Mosaists of our Lord's time, denied the resurrection.

⁸ § 26. vi. 5; § 33. xxxix. 13; § 50. lxiii. 9; § 58. lxxxviii; § 102. cxv. 17.

of power as Jehovah's vicegerent to uproot all wickedness and wicked doers¹, he lost the main impetus which turned the thoughts and feelings of the later Psalmists towards a judgment to come; in the serene enjoyment of the Holy place, where God's honour was to dwell, his satisfaction and happiness was too complete to allow questionings of heart as to the current belief that man was like to the beasts that perish.

The two chief causes which forced the conviction of a hereafter on the later Hebrews, were a deep dissatisfaction at the prosperity of the wicked and the misfortunes of the righteous in the world; and the earnest longing of the soul for a more perfect communion with God than was possible in the present life.

So long on the one hand as adherence to Jehovah secured Jehovah's protection, and goodness went hand in hand with prosperity, there seemed to be even in this life a perfect fulfilment of God's promises; but when the connexion between adherence to Jehovah and worldly prosperity was sundered, when wickedness seemed to be triumphant and the very name of God had passed into a mockery, it became evident to the Hebrews that Jehovah must 'hold His assize in that mysterious region on the other side of death.' The faith of the Jew in the promises was undying. When the realization of them became impossible in this world, he looked forward to the fulfilment of them in a world to come.

On the other hand, it required the discipline of the Captivity to refine the idea of communion with God into a truly spiritual conception. Beforetime it had been understood of outward vision in this world; the reward of the righteous was to see God with the eye not of faith but of sight. It was in this sense that Moses enjoyed it; 'I will speak mouth to mouth with him,' said Jehovah to Aaron and Miriam², 'even apparently and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold;' but it was only in these dark times, when the holiest and securest things were seen to be transitory, when the very city and the Temple, which secured to Israel this communion with Jehovah, were destroyed, that the spirit, borne upwards by its consciousness of participation in the divine nature, finally rose above the world of sense and sight, and gradually breaking free from the old belief that the spirits

¹ Cp. § 6. ci. ix.

² Numbers xii. 8.

of the departed were but dreamy unconscious shades in a land of forgetfulness¹, thus gained glimpses of that higher immortality² which did not become a world-belief till later times.

The first of the three Psalms³ was written in the midst of the terrors of persecution, either from a tyrant or from heathen or from idolatrous Israelites; it is full of passionate appeal, of alternations of hope and despair, and the haven of rest in God's presence is hardly attained. But between this and the 16th Psalm there is a wide interval, if not of time, at least of spiritual experience; for in it all trace of struggle and fear is gone; it is pervaded by the sunshine of peace; hope has become fruition, and in Jehovah's presence there is fulness of joy. In the 49th, the last Psalm of the group, the experience of the two former Psalms is set forth at length as doctrine.

§ 64. PSALM XVII.

I. *The Psalmist in the confidence of his integrity prayeth to God*

Hear the right, O Jehovah, consider my complaint,	1
and hearken unto my prayer that goeth not out of feigned lips!	
my sentence cometh forth from Thy presence,	2
and Thine eyes look upon the thing that is equal;	
Thou hast proved and visited my heart in the night season,	3
Thou hast tried me and findest no wickedness in me, and	
my mouth doth not offend;	
as for men's ways,—by the word of Thy lips	4
I have kept me from the paths of the violent man:	
my goings were holden up in Thy paths,	5
and my footsteps slipped not.	
I call upon Thee, for Thou hearest me, O God!	6
incline Thine ear unto me and hearken unto my words!	

Ver. 2. *sentence, i. e.* I submit myself to Thy judgment, and in confidence await Thy sentence.

¹ Thus Sheol, the classical Hades or Orcus, is rendered 'Hell' in the Authorized Version.
² § 65. xvi. 9—11. ³ xvii.

II. *against the persecution of the wicked,*

Shew Thy marvellous lovingkindness, Thou that art the 7
 saviour of them that put their trust in Thee
 from such as resist Thy right hand !
 keep me as the apple of an eye, 8
 hide me under the shadow of Thy wings,
 from the ungodly that trouble me, 9
 from mine enemies that compass me to take away my life ;
 they have enclosed their heart in fat, 10
 and with their mouth they speak proud things,
 they lie waiting in our way on every side, 11
 and turn their eyes to spy through the land :
 like as a lion that is greedy of his prey, 12
 and as it were a young lion, lurking in his secret places.

III. *that, though the wicked prosper, he may have the blessing of beholding God's presence.*

Up, Jehovah ! disappoint him and cast him down, 13
 deliver my life from the ungodly by Thy sword,
 from men, O Jehovah, by Thy hand,—from men of this world, 14
 which have their portion in this life, whose bellies Thou
 fillest with Thy treasures,
 who have children at their desire and leave their substance 15
 to their babes !
 but as for me, let me behold Thy presence in righteousness, 16
 and when I awake up, let me be satisfied with Thy likeness !

Ver. 10. *in fat, i. e.* are bloated with the presumption bred of prosperity. Cp. § 80, lxxiii. 7, § 130, cxix. 70, and Deut. xxxii. 10.

Ver. 14. *this world.* Cp. Job xxi. 7—14. The idea of the *world* in the New Testament sense has not occurred before. *this life, i. e.* of material prosperity in contrast with that spiritual communion with God, which the Psalmist prays may be his portion. *treasures, i. e.* abundance of God's material gifts.

Ver. 16. Compare this prayer for spiritual communion with God with the earlier conceptions of seeing Him face to face, and speaking with Him mouth to mouth ; once the privilege of Moses (Numbers xii. 8) was unique ; it has now in the new sense become the privilege of every righteous man.

§ 65. PSALM XVI.*

I. *The Psalmist's confidence in Jehovah, in spite of the apostasy of friends;*

Preserve me, O God! for in Thee have I put my trust. 1
 I say of Jehovah, Thou art my Lord, 2
 my goods are as nothing in comparison of Thee!
 the saints which are in the land, 3
 and the nobles, in whom is all my delight—
 they multiply their idols and run after other gods; 4
 their drinkofferings of blood may I not offer, 5
 neither make mention of their names within my lips.

II. *for joy in Jehovah's presence is strength against temptation,*

Jehovah is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; 6
 Thou art the possession of my lot!
 the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places, 7
 yea, I have a goodly heritage.
 I bless Jehovah, for that He gave me counsel, 8
 that my reins also admonished me in the night season;
 I have set Jehovah always before me; 9
 because He is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.

III. *and in His presence is everlasting life.*

Wherefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: 10
 my flesh also shall rest in hope!

Ver. 3. *saints, i. e.* the Israelites, called 'the kingdom of priests, the holy nation,' Ex. xix. 6, 'the saints,' Deut. xxxiii. 3, 'My beloved,' Jer. xi. 15, yet follow the example of the heathen, in running after strange Gods.

Ver. 6. *portion—cup.* The double image of the division of a conquered land and the handing of the *cup* from the head of the family to each member seated at the table. *His portion* is the living presence of Jehovah, who counsels, warns and protects him against evil.

Ver. 7. *lines, (1)* a cord for measuring land. Cp. Amos vii. 17, 'thy land shall be divided by *line*;' (2) the portion of land so measured, as here.

Ver. 10. *thy glory, i. e.* the soul. Cp. § 52. lvii. 9, and note.

Vv. 10—12. For this assurance of immortality for the soul of man in the presence of God cp. § 66. xlix. 15 and Job xix. 26, 27: in § 47. xxxvi. 9, and Proverbs xii. 28 we find the same thought more faintly expressed.

* For Introduction cp. §§ 64—66.

for why? Thou shalt not leave my soul in the grave, 11
 neither shalt Thou suffer Thy loved ones to see corruption;
 Thou shalt shew me the path of life: 12
 in Thy presence is the fulness of joy,
 and in Thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore.

Ver. 11. *grave*. In the Authorized Version two Hebrew words, Sheol and Gehenna, are both rendered 'Hell;' but as Hell is understood to mean a place of punishment (which in Hebrew is Gehenna), it is replaced in this version by the word 'grave,' whenever the original is Sheol, *i. e.* Hades.

§ 66. PSALM XLIX.*

I. *A summons to hear the great lesson,*

O hear ye this, all ye people, 1
 give ear, all ye that dwell in the world;
 high and low, rich and poor, 2
 one with another!
 my mouth shall speak of wisdom, 3
 and my heart shall muse of understanding;
 I will incline mine ear unto the parable, 4
 and shew my dark speech upon the harp:

II. *that the prosperity of the wicked need cause no fear; for wealth without God is of no avail,*

Wherefore should I fear in the days of wickedness, 5
 when the sin of them that would overthrow me doth compass me about,
 of them that put their trust in their goods, 6
 and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches?
 but surely none of them may redeem himself, 7
 nor give a ransom for himself to God,

Ver. 4. *incline mine ear, i. e.* listen in reverent silence for the divine revelation or teaching. *dark speech, i. e.* a fact or a truth to be explained. Cp. Numbers xii. 8. Compare in the N. T. the use of the word 'mystery,' to express a truth before hidden but now revealed. The sense therefore is; I will explain by my song what was before a riddle, *viz.* the prosperity of the wicked.

* For Introduction, see §§ 64—66.

—for it costeth too much to redeem the soul, 8
 that must be let alone for ever—
 so that he may still continue to live 9
 and not see the grave :
 nay, but he shall see it ; wise men also die, 10
 and perish together, as well as the ignorant and the foolish,
 and leave their riches for other ;
 nay, the grave is their everlasting habitation, 11
 their dwelling-place from generation to generation--
 they who were had in honour through the land !
and man in his glory, so he have no understanding, 12
is like unto the beasts that are slaughtered and perish.

III. *and death is the end of the foolish ; but the righteous hath length of days.*

This is the way of them that love foolishness, 13
 and of all those that after them praise their sayings ;
 like sheep, that are appointed to be slain,—death shall be 14
 their shepherd,
 and the righteous shall have dominion over them ;
 yet a little while—and their beauty shall consume away,
 it shall have its dwelling in the grave :
 but God will redeem my soul 15
 from the hand of the grave, when it layeth hold on me.
 Be not thou afraid, though one be made rich, 16
 or if the glory of his house be increased ;
 for he shall carry nothing away with him when he dieth, 17
 neither shall his pomp follow him ;
 for though, while he liveth, he counteth himself an happy man, 18
 and though men praise thee, when thou doest well unto thyself,

Ver. 8. *redeem the soul, i. e.* ransom the life, cp. v. 9. Man is so far below God that he can find no ransom which would persuade God to let him live.

Ver. 14. *sheep.* Cp. § 119. xliv. 12, 22.

Ver. 15. *redeem—grave.* Cp. § 65. xvi. 10—12, and Hos. xiii. 14, and Gen. v. 24.

Ver. 18. *thee* is equivalent to *him* of the preceding line, but is more graphic. *doest well, i. e.* prosperest. For the thought cp. Luke xii. 19, &c.

yet he shall follow the generation of his fathers, 19
 and nevermore shall they see the light!
and man in his glory, so he have no understanding, 20
is like unto the beasts that are slaughtered and perish!

§§ 67, 68. PSALMS XLII, XLIII, LXXXIV.

THESE Psalms are full of the sorrows of the captivity. The terrible blow had come at last: the king and the nobles were carried away to Babylon.

Jeremiah and Ezekiel abound with expressions which indicate the poignancy of the national anguish at this overwhelming calamity. Jehoiachin, the last of David's line, the lion¹ cub of the house of Judah, 'was cast away like a broken² and despised vessel: the voice of the young lion³ should no more be heard on the mountains of Israel: the topmost and tenderest shoot of the royal⁴ cedar tree had been plucked off by the eagle of the East and planted far away in the merchant city of Euphrates. From the top of Lebanon, from the heights of Bashan, from the ridges of Abarim the widowed country shrieked aloud, as she saw the train of her captive king and nobles disappearing in the distant East. From the heights of Hermon, from the top of Mizar, it is no improbable conjecture that the departing⁵ king poured forth this exquisitely plaintive song, in which, from the deep disquietude of his heart, he longs after the presence of God in the Temple⁶, and pleads his cause against the impious nation, the treacherous and unjust man who in spite of plighted⁷ faith had torn him away from his beloved home⁸.

§ 67. PSALM XLII, XLIII.

- I. [Ps. XLII.] *The Psalmist torn from his native land, amid the taunts of his enemies, dwelleth lovingly on the joyous festivals of the Temple;*

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks, 1
 so longeth my soul after Thee, O God!

¹ Ezek. xix. 6.

² Jer. xxii. 24, 28.

³ Ezek. xix. 8.

⁴ Ezek. xvii. 4.

⁵ 2 Kings xxiv. 12.

⁶ xlili. 3, 4.

⁷ § 67. xliii. 1, 2; Joseph. *Antiq.* x. 9.

⁸ Stanley's *Jewish Church*, II. p. 541.

my soul is athirst for God, yea even for the living God; 2
 when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
 my tears have been my meat day and night, 3
 while they daily say unto me, 'where is now thy God?'
 Now when I think thereupon, I pour out my heart within me, 4
 how I went with the multitude,
 and brought them forth into the house of God,
 with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, with such as keep 5
 holyday!
Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so 6
disquieted within me?
O put thy trust in God, for I will yet give Him thanks, 7
which is the help of my countenance and my God!

II. *as he taketh his last look from the border-hills he is overwhelmed with grief;*

My God! my soul is heavy within me; 8
 therefore do I remember Thee from the land of Jordan,
 of Hermon, and the hill of Mizar.
 One flood calleth unto another at the noise of Thy waterspouts; 9
 all Thy waves and billows are gone over me.
 Jehovah hath granted His lovingkindness in the daytime, 10
 and in the night season do I sing of Him and make my
 prayer unto the God of my life;
 I say unto the God of my strength, 'why hast Thou forgotten me? 11
 'why go I thus heavily while the enemy oppresseth me?

[Ps. xlii.] Ver. 2. *living God*, as opposed to the lifeless idols of the heathen.

Ver. 4. *I pour out my heart*, so that it brings me to despair, when amid the mockery of wicked men I think on the time when I led up processions to the Temple of God. Cp. Job x. 1 & xxx. 16.

Ver. 8. *the land of Jordan* and *of the two Hermons*, signifies the North. *the hill of Mizar*. The name signifies 'smallness'; hence in the Prayer-Book Version 'little hill' of Hermon; perhaps it means the lower as contrasted with the upper ridge of Hermon.

Ver. 9. *one flood calleth unto another*. At the thunder of the torrent of God's displeasure, wave biddeth wave come on;—a picture of a rapid succession of calamities.

Ver. 12. *my bones are smitten asunder*. The mockery and reproach of my enemies is as though my very bones were being crushed and destroyed within me.

‘my bones are smitten asunder while mine enemies reproach me; 12
 ‘namely, while they say daily unto me, ‘where is now thy 13
 God?’’

*Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so 14
 disquieted within me?*

*O put thy trust in God, for I will yet praise Him, 15
 which is the help of my countenance and my God!*

III. [PS. XLIII.] *but riseth to hope in the thought that God in his justice would restore him to Jerusalem.*

Give sentence upon me, O God! I

and defend my cause against the ungodly people,

O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man!

for Thou art the God of my strength: why hast Thou put me 2
 from Thee?

and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

O send out Thy light and Thy truth! that they may lead me, 3
 and bring me unto Thy holy hill and to Thy dwelling!

that I may go unto the altar of God, 4

even unto the God of my joy and gladness,

and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God, my
 God!

*Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so 5
 disquieted within me?*

*O put thy trust in God, for I will yet praise Him, 6
 which is the help of my countenance and my God!*

§ 68. PSALM LXXXIV.

THIS Psalm is probably from the pen of the same king¹ as the last, and was composed towards the close of the first ten of those 36 years during which he languished in a Babylonian prison. A later date cannot be assigned, as the Temple is still undestroyed², but time has already done much to mitigate the afflictions of captivity. Pilgrim-

¹ v. 10.

² v. 4.

ages to the Holy City are not uncommon¹. The anguish of the royal captive at being torn from his palace and the Temple has lost its earlier bitterness²; yet there is something peculiarly touching in the contrast he draws between his own confinement in prison and the liberty his subjects enjoy in visiting their country and sharing in the services of the Temple.

The exquisite sensibility, which appears in his Psalms, together with the nobleness³ of character which led him to forget his own troubles in dwelling on the happy lot of his subjects, enables us to understand why the people living under the feebleness of Zedekiah looked forward with longing to his return, emancipated as he had now become from the unfortunate⁴ influences of his brief and boyish reign.

I. *The Psalmist longeth in absence for the holy place,*

O how lovely are Thy dwellings, I
 Jehovah, Thou God of Hosts!
 my soul hath a desire and longing for the courts of Jehovah: 2
 my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
 Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house and the swallow a nest, 3
 where she may lay her young,
 even Thy altars, O Jehovah, God of Hosts,
 my King and my God!

II. *proclaimeth the blessedness of them that dwell there or face the dangers of the pilgrimage.*

Blessed are they that dwell in Thy House: 4
 they shall yet live to praise Thee!
 blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee, 5
 who loveth to think on journeying to Thy House;
 they going through the vale of misery make it a well, 6
 yea, an early rain falleth and covereth it with blessing!

Ver. 4. *shall yet, i.e.* a better time shall come for those who are at Jerusalem.

Ver. 6. *vale of misery, i.e.* those who having undertaken a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, go through the Baka valley, *the vale of misery*, which forms the entrance to Palestine. The cheering prospect of reaching God's House covers the barren desert with blessing. For this picture compare Hosea ii. 14, 15; Is. xxxv. 6, 7.

¹ *vv.* 4—7.

² See preceding Psalm.

³ Josephus, *Antiq.* x. 9.

⁴ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9; 2 Kings xxiv. 9.

they go from strength to strength, 7
and so they appear before God in Sion.

III.

Jehovah, God of Hosts, hear Thou my prayer, 8
hearken, O God of Jacob!
behold, O God, our defender, 9
and look upon the face of Thine Anointed!
for one day in Thy courts is better than a thousand: 10
I had rather be a door-keeper in the House of my God 11
than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness.
for Jehovah our God is a light and a defence! 12
Jehovah will give grace and glory,
and no good thing shall He withhold from them that live
a godly life.

IV.

O Jehovah God of Hosts, 13
blessed is the man that putteth his trust in Thee!

Ver. 7. *strength to strength.* Each difficulty surmounted shall prove a fresh source of strength.

§ 69. PSALM XXII.

THE Psalmist was apparently an exile, still in the hands of his heathen captors¹. His extreme peril², the obloquy and scorn to which he was exposed as a professed worshipper of Jehovah, his imminent death³, are touched on with a tenderness and a power which have made the language familiar to us in another application. Nothing but the faith which rises triumphant over all difficulty could keep alive a hope amid the agonies of suffering such as this. No word of impatience escapes from his lips, above all none of revenge against the enemies who have filled the cup of his miseries to overflowing. And if for a moment his courage and faith seem to give way, if in the dark-

¹ v. 7.² vv. 1, 7, 11, 14.³ v. 18 and note, v. 30.

ness of his dungeon, with his enemies exulting over his approaching execution, he feels that even God for whom he is suffering has abandoned him to the scorn of his enemies, yet it is but for a moment; he rises again through prayer to the hope of deliverance; nay, he even foresees a time when this deliverance shall be known to all the world, and the story of his life shall solace the sufferer in every age.

I. *The Psalmist, though he cried to God, is forsaken and mocked,*

My God, my God! why hast Thou forsaken me, 1
 and art so far from my help and from the words of my
 complaint!
 O my God! I cry in the day-time but Thou hearest not, 2
 in the night season also, and take no rest:
 and yet Thou art the Holy One, 3
 who dwellest among the praises of Israel;
 our fathers trusted in Thee 4
 they trusted in Thee and Thou didst deliver them;
 they called upon Thee and were holpen; 5
 they put their trust in Thee and were not confounded.
 But as for me, I am a worm and no man, 6
 a very scorn of men and the outcast of the people;
 all they that see me laugh me to scorn, 7
 they shoot out their lips and shake their heads,

Ver. 1. *so far.* cp. § 119. xliv. 23, 24; § 76. lxxi. 10.

Ver. 3. This title, *who dwellest among the praises of Israel*, has supplied the place of the older title 'which dwelleth between the cherubim;' which occurs in 1 Sam. iv. 4 and 2 Sam. vi. 2, and is repeated in later Psalms § 108. xcix. 1, and § 122. lxxx. 1. The Israelites loved to think of God as dwelling in the Temple they had built, and ever at hand to aid them: to them it was 'our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee' [Isaiah lxiv. 11]; in its 'most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim,' was the oracle of God [1 Kings viii. 6]; hence the older title denoted a God, never far from His people, ever ready to aid and to counsel them. The new title expresses the same attributes of God, but no longer connects them with the place 'where our fathers praised God,' but with *the praises* they uttered; wherever the people were gathered together to praise God, there was He in the midst of them.

Ver. 7. *shoot out their lips.* Cp. Job xvi. 10, 'They have gaped upon me with their mouth.' *shake.* Cp. Lam. ii. 15; § 119. xliv. 15; § 74. cix. 24.

saying, 'he trusted in God; let Him deliver him, 8
'let Him deliver him if He will have him.'

yet he prayeth again to his Helper of old.

But Thou art He that took me out of my mother's womb; 9
Thou wert my stay when I hanged yet upon my mother's
breasts.

I have been left unto Thee ever since I was born, 10
Thou art my God even from my mother's womb.
O go not far from me, for trouble is nigh at hand, 11
and there is none to help.

II. *Enemies surround him in his suffering and condemnation,*

Many oxen are come about me, 12
mighty bulls of Basan close me in on every side,
they gape upon me with their mouths, 13
as it were a ravening and a roaring lion!
I am poured out like water, 14
and all my bones stick out;
my heart also in the midst of my body
is even like melting wax;
the skin of my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, 15
and my tongue cleaveth to my gums;
and wilt Thou bring me to the dust of death?
for dogs are come about me, 16
the host of wicked men have laid siege against me,
they have bound my hands and my feet; 17

Ver. 9. *mother's womb*, cp. § 76. lxxi. 5.

Ver. 12. *oxen*, i.e. his persecutors. *mighty bulls*: literally 'mighty ones.' The same metaphor occurs also Amos iv. 1, 'Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan [*i.e.* ye well-fed women], that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy,' and Ezek. xxxix. 18.

Ver. 14. *poured out like water*, i.e. unstrung with grief; so *melting wax*; cp. Lam. ii. 11, 'My liver is poured upon the earth for the destruction of the daughter of my people.' *stick out*. This is explained by Job xxxiii. 21; § 41. cxli. 8.

Ver. 15. *dried up*. Cp. § 13. xxxii. 4, 'My moisture is like the drought in summer.'

I may tell all my bones,
 they stand staring and looking upon me,
 they part my garments among them, 18
 and cast lots upon my vesture.

and yet he reneweth his prayer;

But Thou, O Jehovah, be not far from me; 19
 Thou art my strength, haste Thee to help me!
 deliver my soul from the sword, 20
 my darling from the power of the dog!
 save me from the lion's mouth, 21
 and hear me from among the horns of the buffaloes.

III. on his delivery, he will cause God to be praised by all the world;

I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, 22
 in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee!
 'O praise Jehovah, ye that fear Him, 23
 'magnify Him, all ye seed of Jacob,
 'and tremble before Him, all ye seed of Israel:
 'for He hath not despised nor abhorred the low estate of the poor, 24
 'He hath not hid His face from him,
 'but when he called unto Him, He heard him;'
 my praise is of Thee in the great congregation, 25
 my vows will I perform in the sight of them that fear Him;
 the poor shall eat and be satisfied, 26
 they that seek after Jehovah shall praise Him;
 may your heart live for ever!

Ver. 17. *staring*, i.e. triumphing over me in my captivity and ill-treatment.

Ver. 18. *lots*, as was customary in the case of condemned prisoners. Cp. Joel iii. 3; Ob. 11; Nah. iii. 10.

Vv. 20, 21. *dog, lion, buffaloes*. The Psalmist here, to describe his enemies, returns to the use of the images used in vv. 12, 13, 16.

my darling. Cp. § 70. xxxv. 17: the parallelism shews that this expression is synonymous with *my soul*, and therefore denotes the Psalmist.

Ver. 21. *from among*, the prayer of the Psalmist comes to God from among the horns of the buffaloes, who close him in on every side (ver. 12).

Ver. 26. *eat*. In contrast to the time when all his *bones stuck out* (ver. 14). *your*, i.e. their; by a change not uncommon in Hebrew poetry.

that all the ends of the world may remember this and be turned 27
to Jehovah,
and all the kindreds of the nations may worship before Him :
for the kingdom is Jehovah's, 28
and He is the Governor among the peoples.

his story will solace the suffering and live among posterity.

All such as be sad upon earth shall eat and do Him worship, 29
all they that go down into the dust shall kneel before Him, 30
and whoso keepeth not his own soul alive:
our seed shall serve Him, 31
the story of the Lord shall be told to them that come after ;
they shall come and shall declare His deliverance, 32
yea, to the people that shall be born, that He hath done this.

Ver. 29. *shall eat*, *i. e.* their sadness is changed into banqueting, carrying out the metaphor of ver. 26.

Ver. 30. *dust*, *i. e.* 'of death' (ver. 15). *whoso keepeth not*: literally, 'who hath not respited his life;' *i. e.* a prisoner in immediate peril of execution.

§§ 70—78. PSALMS XXXV, XXXVIII, XL (INCLUDING LXX), LXIX,
CIX, LI, LXXI, XXV, XXXIV.

THESE Psalms are grouped together because they bear a common impress: they are pervaded by a marked similarity of sentiments, they are called forth by similar circumstances; they represent indeed changes of life and changes of character; thus at one time¹ they record the despairing cry of an exile, at another some fierce² struggle in a believer's soul, or his reviving trust³ in God; yet these changes are not greater than might well be experienced in a long and eventful life, and are not such as to preclude the idea suggested by their general similarity, that they are the work of one author.

It is true that the historical books do not enable us to assign these Psalms to any character in the history, but the writer's life may be gathered from the Psalms. He is an exile, so hopelessly cut off from

¹ xxxv; xxxviii; lxix; cix.

² xl; xxxiv; li; lxxi.

³ xxv.

the service of God in the sanctuary, that the very yearning which filled the hearts of earlier exiles has died out; they¹ had never ceased to look forward to the time when they should return to Jerusalem to worship there; he speaks as one not bound to the Temple by early associations, but content anywhere, either amid his captive brethren or their heathen masters, to praise the Holy One of Israel². The facts of his life and the physical impossibility of fulfilling the service of the written Law have forced upon him the lesson that true worship requires only to be offered 'in spirit and in truth³.' Compelled by loss of the outward ritual to rest only on inward communion with God, the Psalmist has learnt to try his life by a severer canon, and thus the ideas of sin⁴ and repentance⁵ attain a prominence and vitality, which they never had while the Temple was standing. Thus while these Psalms have their own value, as throwing light on the feelings of the nation in a dark time, yet above and beyond all this and despite the bitterness of personal feeling⁶ which here and there appears, there may be seen in them the germs of all that is most spiritual in religion.

The Psalmist is not a prophet, whose human impulses have been trained by a life of devotion to bend to God; he is rather a man of vehement emotion, incapable of persistent self-control and only at last restored to peace by learning the spirit of true repentance. The character of his sufferings, the nature of his guilt, and the objects of his aspiration, shew him to have been a man of position in the state, maybe a warrior⁷, or even a king. It is this rank that at one time adds bitterness⁸ to his degradation, at another gives scope to his passion⁹, and in his last days allows him to speak¹⁰ as one in authority to the new generation of his countrymen.

He lives to see Jerusalem and the Temple destroyed¹¹ and the cup of his nation's woe filled to overflowing, but he has gained with time the mastery over his own soul, and thus, though the glory of his nation seems to have set for ever, he can yet discern the light of a coming deliverance¹².

¹ § 49. lxi. 8; § 67. xliii. 4.

³ xl. 8—13; li. 15—17; lxix. 31, 32.

⁶ xxxv. 4—8; lxix. 23—29; cix. 5 et seq.

⁸ cix. 7, Introduction.

¹⁰ lxxi. 14—16; li. 13; xl. 13; xxxiv. 1, 2.

¹² Cp. notes on § 37. lxxvi; § 63. lxxii.

² xxxv. 28; xl. 3 seqq. 13; cix. 29; li. 13, 19 note.

⁴ li. 5.

⁵ li. 10.

⁷ See the metaphors used xxxv. 2, 3.

⁹ li. 14.

¹¹ lxix. 9.

§§ 70, 71. PSALMS XXXV, XXXVIII.*

THE Psalmist appears from the images¹ he employs to have met with persecution from powerful warriors and to have fallen into a dangerous sickness²; in the hour of weakness his enemies, and even those whom he had befriended³, glory in his misfortunes, and treat them as a punishment for the crimes of which they falsely accuse him⁴.

This persecution is the result of espousing the cause of order⁵ and religion, and the Psalmist in his prostration can see no hope of deliverance unless God shall signally interpose in his behalf⁶.

§ 70. PSALM XXXV.

I. *The Psalmist prayeth God to do battle against his enemies,*

Strive Thou, O Jehovah, with them that strive with me, 1
 fight Thou against them that fight against me;
 lay hand upon the shield and buckler, 2
 and stand up to help me,
 bring forth the spear and battle-axe against them that persecute me, 3
 say to my soul, I am thy help!
 let them be confounded and put to shame that seek after my life, 4
 let them be turned back and put to confusion that imagine
 mischief for me!
 let them be as chaff before the wind, 5
 and the angel of Jehovah scattering them;
 let their way be dark and slippery, 6
 and let the angel of Jehovah pursue them;
 for without cause have they hid their net in a pit for me, 7
 without cause have they digged a pit for my life;

Ver. 4. This verse, which makes the first strophe longer than the two succeeding, may have been inserted here from § 72. xl. 17, where it also occurs.

* See Introduction, page 176.

² XXXV. 12-14; XXXVIII. 20.

⁶ XXXV. 1, 23; XXXVIII. 15, 21.

¹ XXXV. 1, 2, 3.

⁴ XXXV. 11.

² XXXV. 15. Cp. 13. XXXVIII. 3-7.

⁵ XXXV. 20; XXXVIII. 20.

let destruction come upon him unawares, 8
 let his net that he hath laid privily catch himself,
 that he may fall into his own pit;
 and my soul shall be joyful in Jehovah, 9
 it shall rejoice in His salvation;
 all my bones shall say, 'Jehovah, who is like unto Thee, 10
 'who delivereth the poor from him that is too strong for him,
 'the poor and the needy from him that spoileth them?'

II. *and justifieth his prayer by describing the deceit and ingratitude of his enemies,*

False witnesses rise up; 11
 they lay to my charge things that I know not of;
 they requite me evil for good, 12
 to the great discomfort of my soul!
 nevertheless when they were sick, I put on sackcloth, 13
 and humbled my soul with fasting,
 and my prayer fell upon my bosom;
 I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or my brother; 14
 I went heavily as one that mourneth for his mother;
 but in mine adversity they rejoice and gather themselves together, 15
 yea, they scourge me for things that I know not of;
 they make mouths at me and cease not;
 with shameless mockings and malicious lies, 16
 they gnash upon me with their teeth.

Ver. 8. *him*. The change from the plural to the singular shews the concentration of personal feeling against the leader of his enemies.

Ver. 11. *know not of*, *i.e.* they demand satisfaction at my hands for injuries said to have been inflicted by me, of which I have never even heard.

Ver. 13. *my prayer*, *i.e.* his sorrow was so great that while he prayed his head remained bowed upon his bosom. Cp. 1 Kings xviii. 42, where Elijah, when praying, 'put his face between his knees.'

Ver. 15. *in mine adversity*, that is, 'when I felt ill.' *scourges*, that is, the scourges of pitiless and reviling tongues; cp. Job v. 21: 'the scourge of the tongue.' *make mouths*, or 'mows'; see Glossary.

Lord! how long wilt thou look upon this? 17
 O deliver my soul from their pitfalls,
 my darling from the lions;
 so will I give Thee thanks in the great congregation, 18
 I will praise Thee among much people;
 O let not my lying enemies triumph over me, 19
 neither let them wink with their eyes that hate me without a
 cause.

III. *and sheweth his common cause with the good.*

And why? their communing is not for peace, 20
 but they imagine deceit against them that are quiet in the land;
 they gape upon me with their mouths, 21
 and say, 'fie on thee, fie on thee!
 'we saw it with our eyes.'
 Thou hast seen it, O Jehovah; hold not Thy tongue; 22
 be not far from me, O Lord;
 awake and stand up to judge my quarrel, 23
 even for my cause, my God and my Lord;
 judge me, Jehovah my God, according to Thy righteousness, 24
 and let them not triumph over me;
 let them not say in their hearts, 'there, there, so would we 25
 have it';
 neither let them say, 'we have devoured him.'
 let them be put to confusion and shame together that rejoice 26
 at my trouble;
 let them be clothed with rebuke and dishonour that boast
 themselves against me;

Ver. 17. *darling*. Cp. § 69. xxii. 20 and note. *lions*. Cp. § 69. xxii. 12, 16, 21.

Ver. 19. *wink with their eyes*, i. e. in mockery.

Ver. 21. *saw it*, i. e. that the Psalmist was struck down with sickness.

Ver. 22. *Thou hast seen it*. A quick transition. If his enemies have seen his fall and rejoiced over it, there is one, even God, who has seen their malicious exultation.

let them be glad and rejoice that favour my salvation; 27
 yea, let them say alway, 'blessed be Jehovah,
 'who hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant ;'
 and my tongue shall sing of Thy salvation, 28
 and of Thy praise all the day long !

§ 71. PSALM XXXVIII.*

I. *The Psalmist in sickness prayeth for the mitigation of his punishment,*

Put me not to rebuke, O Jehovah, in Thine anger, 1
 neither chasten me in Thy heavy displeasure !
 for Thine arrows stick fast in me, 2
 and Thy hand presseth me sore ;
 there is no health in my flesh, because of Thy displeasure, 3
 neither is there any rest in my bones by reason of my sin :
 for my punishments are gone over my head, 4
 and are like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear ;
 my wounds stink and are corrupt, 5
 through my foolishness ;
 I am bowed down and brought very low, 6
 I go mourning all the day long ;
 for my loins are filled with a sore disease, 7
 and there is no whole part in my body ;
 I am feeble and sore smitten, 8
 I have roared for the very disquietness of my heart.

II. *and calleth on God to witness his patience in pain, desertion and danger,*

Lord, Thou knowest all my desire, 9
 my groaning is not hid from Thee ;
 my heart panteth, my strength hath failed me, 10
 and the sight of mine eyes is gone from me :
 my friends and my neighbours stand looking on my trouble, 11
 and my kinsmen stand afar off ;

* For Introduction, see p. 176.

they also that seek after my life lay snares for me ; 12
they that go about to do me evil talk of mischief,
and imagine deceit all the day long :
as for me I am like a deaf man and hear not, 13
and as one that is dumb who doth not open his mouth ;
I am become even as a man that heareth not, 14
and in whose mouth are no reproofs,
for in Thee, O Jehovah, do I put my trust ; 15
Thou wilt hear me, O Lord, my God !

III. and prayeth for help, for his fall would rejoice the enemies of God.

For I said within myself, ' O that they should not triumph over 16
me,
' and, when my foot slippeth, rejoice greatly against me ; '
for truly I am nigh unto falling, 17
and my heaviness is ever before me,
for I confess my wickedness, 18
and am sorry for my sin ;
but they that are mine enemies without cause are multiplied, 19
and they that hate me wrongfully are many in number ;
they also that requite evil for good are against me, 20
because I follow the thing that good is ;
forsake me not, O Jehovah, 21
my God, be not Thou far from me !
haste Thee to help me, 22
O Lord, my salvation !

§ 72. PSALM XL. (INCLUDING¹ PSALM LXX).*

THIS Psalm consists of two parts², between which the connexion of thought is not very apparent; for, instead of the usual³ order, in which a prayer at the commencement of the Psalm is followed by a song of praise or thanksgiving at its close, we have here first a thanksgiving for deliverance⁴, and then a prayer for help⁵.

The Psalmist beset with peril is reminded of a previous deliverance from a similar trial⁶. This recollection fills him with hope and lifts him from the depths of his despair. He recalls the joyous feelings⁷ with which he then poured forth his thanksgiving to God, and the symbolical act⁸ by which he had declared his thankfulness. Since then he has profited by the lessons of experience. Affliction has brought him nearer to God and given him a deeper insight into His will. He has learnt that God's ways are not represented by the anthropomorphic conceptions of the day. Jehovah is not merely a God of vengeance but of righteousness: not a Being to be appeased by the blood of victims, but one who delights to reveal the law to man⁹, and that His sacrifices are contrition of heart and surrender of the human will¹⁰.

I. *The Psalmist's former experience of God's help;*

I waited patiently for Jehovah, 1
and He inclined unto me and heard my calling;
He brought me out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, 2
and set my feet upon the rock and established my going;

Ver. 2. *pit—mire*. The allusion is to a dungeon similar to that in which Jeremiah was confined: see Jer. xxxviii. 6, 'and in the dungeon there was no water, but mire; so Jeremiah sunk in the mire.' Cp. § 73. lxix. 2.

* For Introduction, see p. 176.

¹ The fourth strophe of the 40th Psalm is so complete in itself as a prayer that it has been used separately as an independent Psalm, the 70th of the Psalter. For a list of Psalms made up of portions of other Psalms see § 24. xxvii. note.

² 1st part, vv. 1—13; 2nd part, vv. 14—21.

³ See §§ 57. xxxi. and others.

⁶ vv. 16, 21.

⁷ vv. 3, 5—7.

⁴ vv. 1, 2, 3.

⁸ v. 10.

⁵ vv. 14, 16, 21.

⁹ v. 8.

¹⁰ vv. 9, 10.

- and He put a new song in my mouth; 3
 'thanks be to our God,
 'let many see this and fear, 4
 'and put their trust in Jehovah!
 'blessed is the man that hath set his hope in Jehovah, 5
 'and turned not unto the proud, and to such as go about
 with lies!
 'O Jehovah, my God, manifold are the wondrous works, that 6
 Thou hast done,
 'like as be also Thy thoughts that are to us ward,
 'there is nothing that can be compared with Thee!
 'if I should declare them, and speak of them, 7
 'they should be more than I am able to express.'

II. *his consequent enlightenment in God's law; his vow of obedience;*

- Sacrifice and meat-offering Thou wouldest not; 8
 mine ear hadst Thou opened:
 burnt offerings and sacrifice for sin didst Thou not require, 9
 then said I, 'lo, I come
 'with the roll of the book, that is written for me; 10
 'I am content to do Thy will, O my God,
 'yea, Thy law is within my heart!'

Ver. 3. *thanks*. The Psalmist had before been in trouble, had prayed to God (ver. 2), and been delivered (ver. 3), and here the sentence *he put a new song* is followed by a quotation from the song of thanksgiving; the words may have run thus,

'Thanks be to our God!
 see this, ye people, and fear,
 and put your trust in Jehovah.'

He then quotes in verses 5—7 the succeeding words of the thanksgiving.

Ver. 8. *opened*. Literally, had bored through his ears, *i. e.* made him who was deaf before, to hear: cp. Ruth iv. 4; 1 Sam. ix. 15; 2 Sam. vii. 27; Is. l. 5. This means, that God by His former dealings, had brought him to a clearer knowledge of His ways.

Ver. 10. *I come with the roll of the book*. Under the image of bringing the roll of the newly found law he expresses his approach to God with the sacrifice not of victims but of an obedient heart. Cp. 1 Sam. xv. 22. The image accords well with the period to which the Psalm has been assigned. *roll*. Cp. Jer. xxxvi. 2, 8.

for me, i. e. prescribing *for me* the obedience which God requires.

I have declared Thy gracious dealing in the great congregation, 11
 yea, I have not refrained my lips,
 O Jehovah, and that Thou knowest!
 I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; 12
 my talk hath been of Thy truth and of Thy salvation;
 I have not kept back Thy loving mercy and truth from 13
 the great congregation.

III. *his appeal for a renewal of God's help.*

Thou, O Jehovah, wilt not withdraw Thy mercy from me, 14
 let Thy lovingkindness and truth alway preserve me!
 for innumerable troubles are come about me, 15
 my chastisements are upon me, I am not able to look up;
 yea, they are more in number than the hairs of my head,
 and my heart hath failed me.

IV.

O Jehovah, let it be Thy pleasure to deliver me, 16
 make haste, O Jehovah, to help me!
 let them be ashamed and confounded together, 17
 that seek after my soul to destroy it;
 let them be driven backward and put to rebuke,
 that wish me evil!
 let them be confounded and rewarded with shame, 18
 that say unto me, 'fie upon thee, fie upon thee!'
 let all those that seek Thee be joyful and glad in Thee, 19
 and let such as love Thy salvation say alway, 'Jehovah be
 praised!'
 as for me, I am poor and helpless; haste thee to help me, 20
 O Lord,
 Thou art my trust and my redeemer; 21
 make no long tarrying, O my God!

Ver. 17. This verse occurs again § 70. xxxv. 4, where it has been inserted possibly from this Psalm.

§ 73. PSALM LXIX.

THIS Psalm comes from the earlier times of the captivity¹, when the Psalmist, from his zeal to maintain the religion and service of Jehovah² in all its purity, was exposed to the scorn heaped on the worshippers of that God whose Temple had been destroyed. From the images employed it is possible that he had in his own person suffered the horrors of a dungeon, such as is described in the story of Jeremiah³. But his severest suffering is when his enemies break in upon him with their mockery and seek by false accusations to rob him of all that is left, his good name and self-respect⁴. This crowning insult forces from him a long and terrible imprecation⁵; yet the outburst of human feeling gives relief; the very vividness of imagination, with which he imprecates the fall of the oppressor, leads by a natural chain of thought to the triumph of the righteous. No picture of Divine judgment is complete, which does not include the restoration of the righteous⁶ to their inheritance; so here the poet dips into the future and sees the worship of Jehovah restored, and His adherents re-established in their native land⁷. Thus the long struggle, begun in bitterness and despair, closes with thoughts of sympathy and hope.

I. *The Psalmist crieth for help in persecution,*

Save me, O God!

I

for the waters are come in, even unto my soul,

I stick fast in the deep mire where no ground is;

2

I am come into deep waters,

so that the floods run over me;

Ver. 1. *soul*. Here, as in other passages where the context requires it, *life* may be substituted for '*soul*.' Cp. Jer. iv. 10; § 70. xxxv. 4; § 74. cix. 30; § 76. lxxi. 9, where A. V. uses '*soul*' for '*life*,' and 1 Sam. xix. 11; Job ii. 6, where '*life*' is admitted.

¹ v. 34.⁵ vv. 23—29.² v. 9.³ Jer. xxxviii.⁶ vv. 30—37.⁴ vv. 4, 5, 21, 27.⁷ vv. 36, 37.

I am weary of crying ; my throat is dry ; 3
 my sight faileth me
 for waiting so long upon my God ;
 they that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of 4
 my head,
 they that would destroy me guiltless are more in number than
 my bones ;
 shall I pay them the things that I never took ? 5

O God, Thou knowest my punishment,
 and my sufferings are not hid from Thee !
 let not them that trust in Thee be ashamed for my cause, 6
 O Jehovah, God of Hosts ;
 let not them that seek Thee be confounded through me,
 O Thou God of Israel !

II. *for he is suffering in God's cause:*

And why ! for Thy sake do I suffer reproof, 7
 shame hath covered my face ;
 I am become a stranger unto my brethren, 8
 even an alien unto my mother's children ;
 for zeal for Thine house hath even eaten me, 9
 and the rebukes of them that rebuke Thee are fallen upon me ;

Ver. 4. *bones*. There are two readings here, 1. They that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty ; 2. They that are my wrongful enemies are more numerous than my bones. The 2nd has been adopted, retaining the Prayer-Book expression *they that would destroy me guiltless*. The number of the human bones was a familiar thought to this Psalmist, cp. § 78. xxxiv. 20 ; § 70. xxxv. 10 ; § 29. li. 8.

Ver. 5. *pay them the things that I never took*, i.e. under false accusation he is compelled to make restitution for robberies of which he is guiltless. Cp. § 70. xxxv. 11.

punishment, the consequences of his foolishness or sin. Cp. § 71. xxxviii. 3. As righteousness and blessing are so inseparably connected in the Hebrew mind that the same word may be used for either (cp. § 4. xxiv. 5 note), so here sin and the suffering consequent on it. Though as between God and himself his suffering is a punishment for sin, yet as between himself and his enemies it is a persecution for God's sake ; it is on this ground he claims to be relieved.

I wept and chastened myself with fasting,— 10
 and that was turned to my reproof;
 I put on sackcloth also,— 11
 and they jested upon me;
 they that sit in the gate sing of me, 12
 and the drunkards make songs upon me.

therefore he prayeth afresh to Him,

But I make my prayer unto Thee, O Jehovah! 13
 in an acceptable time, O God, in the multitude of Thy 14
 mercy,
 vouchsafe unto me the truth of Thy salvation!
 take me out of the mire that I sink not, 15
 O let me be delivered from them that hate me and out of
 deep waters;
 let not the water-flood drown me, 16
 neither let the deep swallow me up,
 let not the pit shut her mouth upon me!
 hear me, O Jehovah, for Thy lovingkindness is comfortable, 17
 turn Thee unto me according to the multitude of Thy mercies;
 and hide not Thy mercy from Thy servant, 18
 for I am in trouble; O haste Thee and hear me;
 draw nigh unto my soul and save it, 19
 O deliver me, because of mine enemies!
 Thou knowest my reproof, my shame and my dishonour, 20
 mine adversaries are all in Thy sight!
 rebuke had broken my heart, I was full of heaviness, 21
 I looked for some to have pity on me but there was no man,
 neither found I any to comfort me;

Ver. 12. *gate*, the place of public resort. Cp. Gen. xix. 1; Ex. xxxii. 26; 2 Sam. iii. 27; Jer. xvii. 19.

Ver. 13. *acceptable time*, i. e. the time of God's good pleasure.

Ver. 14. *truth*, i. e. faithful fulfilment.

Ver. 16. *pit*. Cp. ver. 2, deep mire, and § 72. xl. 2, 'out of the horrible pit, out of the mire and clay,' and note.

they gave me gall in my food, 22
and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

III. *to punish them:*

Let their table be a snare to take themselves withal, 23
a stumblingblock for them that dwell at ease ;
let their eyes be blinded that they see not, 24
and ever bow Thou down their backs ;
pour out Thine indignation upon them, 25
and let Thy wrathful displeasure take hold of them ;
let their habitation be void, 26
and no man to dwell in their tents !
for they persecute them whom Thou hast smitten, 27
and vex him whom Thou hast wounded ;
hold them guilty according to their guilt, 28
and let them not come into Thy mercy ;
let them be wiped out of the book of the living, 29
and not be written among the righteous !

therefore the cause of the righteous and afflicted shall prevail,

As for me, when I am poor and in heaviness, 30
Thy help, O God, shall lift me up !
I will praise the name of God, with a song, 31
and magnify it with thanksgiving ;
this shall please Jehovah better than an ox, 32
yea than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs !
the humble shall see this, and be glad ; 33
let your heart rejoice, ye that seek after God !

Ver. 22. *they gave me, i. e.* when I looked for sympathy, I found mockery.

gall. By this word the A. V. denotes some bitter and poisonous herb, which cannot be exactly identified ; in Hos. x. 4 the same word is translated 'hemlock.'

Ver. 23. *table.* Cp. Is. xxi. 5. He prays that his persecutors may be ruined by their luxury, the thought of which appears suggested by his own want (ver. 22).

Ver. 29. *book of the living, i. e.* from the register, or civil list in which the names of citizens are enrolled. Cp. Ezek. xiii. 9 ; Ezra ii. 62 ; Ex. xxxii. 32.

for Jehovah heareth the poor, 34
 He despiseth not His prisoners.
 Let heaven and earth praise Him, 35
 the sea and all that moveth therein!

and the nation will be restored to prosperity.

For God will save Sion and build up the cities of Judah, 36
 that men may dwell there and have them in possession!
 the posterity also of Thy servants shall inherit them, 37
 they that love Thy name shall dwell therein!

§ 74. PSALM CIX.

THIS Psalm reveals to us a dark picture of the Captivity. No prose description, no enumeration of details, could convey to us the terrible evils of that time so vividly as this lyric outburst of passionate imprecation. The selfish and cowardly have yielded to the enticements and threats of their heathen masters and have turned against their brethren with the proverbial animosity of renegades: the devotion of the faithful has been kindled by persecution into a furious zeal. Terrible indeed must have been the treachery and persecution which could drive a martyr to implore Jehovah's aid against his persecutors in a prayer so deliberate and so prolonged. One who had been his friend turns round on him as an accuser¹, drags him as a criminal before a heathen king², as if it were his victim and not himself who had lost his sense of right. Well may the spirit of the Psalmist be bitter, and well may he in his bitterness call down on his enemy's head the exact counterpart of his own suffering³—false accusation, loss of position, and ruin of all his hopes.

¹ vv. 1, 3.

² v. 30 with v. 5.

v. 5 et seq.; see v. 16; v. 7.

I. *The Psalmist in time of persecution*

Hold not Thy tongue, O God of my praise! 1
 for the mouth of the ungodly and deceitful is opened upon me,
 they have spoken against me with false tongues, 2
 they have compassed me about also with words of hatred,
 and fought against me without a cause;
 for the love that I had unto them, lo, they take now my con- 3
 trary part,
 but I give myself unto prayer;
 thus have they rewarded me evil for good, 4
 and hatred for my goodwill.

prayeth God to requite his enemies

Set Thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, 5
 and let an adversary stand at his right hand;
 when sentence is given upon him, let him be condemned, 6
 and let his prayer be turned into sin!
 let his days be few, 7
 let another take his office;
 let his children be fatherless, 8
 and his wife a widow,
 let his children be vagabonds and beg their bread, 9
 yea, let them seek it from their desolate homes!

II.

Let the extortioner consume all that he hath, 10
 and let the stranger spoil his labour;

Ver. 1. *God of my praise, i. e.* the receiver of my praise.

Ver. 3. *my, i. e.* a part contrary to me.

Ver. 5. *him, i. e.* his special enemy. *an adversary, i. e.* accuser, who had the right hand assigned to him, so that all his suggestions might be heard. See Zech. iii. 1. So in ver. 30, the constant readiness of God to help is expressed by His standing at the *right hand* of the helpless.

Ver. 6. *prayer be turned into sin, i. e.* his prayer for mercy shall only aggravate his guilt, and increase his condemnation. Cp. Prov. xxviii. 9, 'his prayer shall be abomination.'

Ver. 9. *bread—homes, i. e.* let their night be spent amid the ruins, and their days in begging their bread.

Ver. 10. *stranger.* Cp. Is. v. 17, 'the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.'

let there be no man to have pity on him, 11
 nor to have compassion upon his fatherless children;
 let his posterity be destroyed, 12
 and in the next generation let his name be clean put out;
 let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the 13
 sight of Jehovah,
 and let not the sin of his mother be done away;
 let them be alway before Jehovah, 14
 that he may root out the memorial of them from off the earth!

for their treachery,

And that, because his mind was not to do good, 15
 but he persecuted the poor and helpless man,
 and him that was vexed at the heart, that he might destroy him;
 his delight was in cursing,—and it happened unto him; 16
 he loved not blessing,—and it is far from him;
 he clothed himself with cursing like as with a raiment, 17
 therefore doth it come into his bowels like water,
 and like oil into his bones;
 let it be unto him as the cloke that he hath upon him, 18
 and as the girdle that he is alway girded withal!
 let it thus happen from Jehovah unto mine enemies, 19
 and to those that speak evil against my soul!

III. *and to have mercy on him for his fidelity:*

But do Thou, O Lord Jehovah, deal with me according to Thy 20
 name;
 deliver me, for Thy mercy is sweet!
 for I am helpless and poor, 21
 and my heart is wounded within me;

Ver. 17. *cursing—oil into his bones.* The curse upon him penetrates his being through and through: the cursing, which he wore to poison the lives of others, now poisons his own.

I go hence like the shadow that departeth, 22
 and am driven away as the grasshopper;
 my knees are weak through fasting, 23
 my flesh is dried up for want of fatness,
 for I became a reproach unto them, 24
 when they looked upon me they shook their heads.

Help me, O Jehovah, my God, 25
 save me according to Thy mercy,
 and they shall know how that this is Thy hand, 26
 and that Thou, Jehovah, hast done it!
 though they curse, yet Thou shalt bless,— 27
 though they rise up against me, they shall be ashamed,
 but Thy servant shall rejoice;
 let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, 28
 let them cover themselves with their own confusion as with
 a cloke!

IV. *for he rejoiceth in God.*

As for me, let me give thanks unto Jehovah with my mouth, 29
 and praise Him among the multitude,
 for He standeth at the right hand of the poor, 30
 to save him from them that judge his life.

Ver. 22. *that departeth*, literally, when it departeth. The Psalmist is compared to a shadow, which is on the point to fade away. Cp. § 79. cii. 11; § 142. cxliv. 4; and § 34. xc. 4, note. *grasshopper*, *i. e.* locust *driven away* by the wind. Cp. Joel ii. 20, 'I will remove far off from you the northern army (*i. e.* the locusts), and will drive him away' (*i. e.* by the wind); Job xxxix. 20; Nahum iii. 17, 'Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, but when the sun ariseth they flee away.'

Vv. 27—30. The idea of the fall of the wicked suggests that of the rise of the good: hence the Psalm closes in peace.

Ver. 30. *judge his life*, *i. e.* oppress him by unjust judgment on a capital charge.

§ 75. PSALM LI.*

AT the time when this Psalm was written, the rites of the ceremonial law, while still suggesting the metaphors of the Psalmist¹, have fallen into abeyance, for the city and the Temple have been overthrown².

The Psalmist has been guilty of a great crime³; the use of the words 'blood-guiltiness' and 'hyssop' suggests the idea that he may have taken a murderous vengeance on one of his enemies. But now that the passionate impulse is satisfied, the full sense of estrangement from God enters his soul; and in this Psalm are set forth the thoughts with which in the first burst of repentance he seeks to renew communion with God.

The feelings expressed are not such as are natural to a religion in the time of its vigorous life, still less in its period of dead formalism; the conception of sin⁴ is too subtle for the one, the desire for spiritual purification too earnest for the other⁵. The feelings are those of a time later than either. The religion has already passed through a period of decay, and again revived; living thought has restored life to ceremonial, earnestness has supplanted formalism. Such a Psalm could not have been written till formalism had come into existence, nor till its evil consequences had made themselves felt. It is instructive to contrast the subtle analysis of thought in this Psalm with the simplicity which marks the outburst⁶ of David's feelings on a similar occasion.

As the Psalmist ponders on his misery, he learns that its severity is due not to the actual misdeed which he has committed, but to the sinfulness of heart which alone could betray him into so great a crime. It is this sinfulness that has brought⁷ the sentence of alienation from God as the just punishment of guilt. The crime may be atoned for by a public penance; not so the tendency to sin; this is from within and not from without, and can only be removed by an inner cleansing and

* See Introduction, p. 176.

¹ *vv.* 2, 7, 17.

² *vv.* 7, 17.

³ *vv.* 18, 19.

⁴ § 13. xxxii.

⁵ *vv.* 2, 14.

⁶ *v.* 4.

⁷ *vv.* 4, 5.

by the renewal of the spirit of God. Yet even in dwelling on the inherited¹ wickedness of his nature and confessing his estrangement from God, he gains comfort from the thought that God is using this very corruption of his nature to reconcile him to Himself². The consequences of the sin have formed such an era in his spiritual life, that he cannot help looking back upon the sin itself as designed by God³ to vindicate His mercy in performing the highest office of a judge,—the passing such a sentence as shall lead to the reformation of the offender.

The experience of the Psalmist is no unreality: it has often happened that from an actual fall a man has risen to a higher life; conscience, stung by shame at the depth of the fall, has made him restless and dissatisfied with his whole previous life, however outwardly respectable and decorous. With this view of Divine discipline the Psalmist would fain offer a public thanksgiving to God for releasing him from the bondage of sin; but he has learnt that in good and in evil alike the will and not the deed is regarded in God's sight⁴. So, though there is no longer a Temple to receive his offering, yet he feels assured that the incense of a thankful spirit, though neither offered in the hallowed place nor accompanied by outward symbol, will not go up in vain to the throne of God.

I. *The Psalmist professeth his repentance and asketh for mercy:*

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy great goodness; 1
 according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away mine
 offences;
 wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, 2
 and cleanse me from my sin!
 for I acknowledge my faults, 3
 and my sin is ever before me;

¹ v. 5.

² v. 7.

³ v. 4 and note.

⁴ vv. 17, 18.

against Thee only have I sinned, 4
 and done this evil in Thy sight,
 that Thou mightest be righteous in Thy sentence,
 and clear when Thou art judge.

II. *he pleadeth the sinfulness of his nature:*

Behold, I was shapen in wickedness, 5
 and in sin hath my mother conceived me:
 but lo, Thou requirest truth in the inward parts, 6
 and shalt make me to understand wisdom secretly;
 Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, 7
 Thou shalt wash me and I shall be whiter than snow:

Ver. 4. *against Thee—judge.* ‘I think only of my sin in relation to God, and the alienation from Him, which it has brought as its punishment. I see that I was allowed to sin, in order that God’s righteousness might be made clear by His performing the highest act of a judge, viz. by passing such a sentence as will lead to my reformation.’ *against Thee.* It appears from vv. 2, 14, that the Psalmist has been guilty of some crime against a particular man. In what sense then can he say that he has sinned only against God? The Psalmist looks beyond the actual crime to the cause from which it sprung; his own sinful nature. So far does the cause outweigh the act in importance, that he loses sight of the offence against man. Some recompence or some ceremonial purification may restore him to his place among his fellow-men; but his estrangement from God will last as long as its cause remains, that is, till the sinner honestly acknowledges his sinfulness, and renews his relation with his God. Cp. § 71. xxxviii. 18; Isaiah lix. 12; Amos v. 21. *that, i. e.* in order that. It is at first sight difficult to suppose it to be meant that God for His own good purposes intended that the Psalmist should sin. But the idea is not uncommon in the Old Testament: to the Jews God was the rule by whose fiat every event took place: without His consent Satan could not tempt Job (cp. Job i. 12): without Him the heart of Pharaoh could not be hardened to refuse to let the children of Israel go (cp. Ex. iv. 21), or that of Sihon to oppose their march (cp. Deut. ii. 30); so David’s being tempted to number the people is assigned to God by the writer of the book of Samuel, while the later writer in Chronicles assigns it to Satan (2 Sam. xxiv. 1, 1 Chron. xxi. 1). It is in this view the Psalmist could say that God made him to sin. The result of the Psalmist’s sin has been his discernment of the righteousness of God; he describes the result as if it had really been God’s aim in letting him sin. *sentence, i. e.* the judicial sentence of alienation from God, which was the punishment of his sin. This sentence was not delivered outwardly by the mouth of a prophet, but inwardly by the voice of conscience speaking to him in his own heart. *clear.* God as a judge is regarded as an officer under account; His judgment in this case will be *clear* from all imputation of injustice.

Ver. 5. *behold.* This verse expresses the truth that in every human being there exists through the very conditions of his nature an hereditary germ of future sin. Cp. Job xiv. 4, ‘Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.’ Cp. Job v. 6, 7.

Ver. 6. *secretly, i. e.* in the hidden chambers of the heart.

Ver. 7. *hyssop.* According to Num. xix. 16, 17, 18, in the case of uncleanness from touching a dead body, hyssop was to be dipped in water containing the ashes of the red heifer and

Thou shalt make me hear of joy and gladness, 8
that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice.

III. *and prayeth for the guidance of God's spirit,*

Turn Thy face from my sins, 9
and put out all my misdeeds;
make me a clean heart, O God, 10
and renew a right spirit within me;
cast me not away from Thy presence, 11
and take not Thy holy spirit from me.
O give me the comfort of Thy help again, 12
and stablish me with Thy free spirit!

IV. *that he may pay the true sacrifice of praise:*

Then shall I teach Thy ways unto the wicked, 13
and sinners shall be converted unto Thee;
deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my sal-
vation, 14
and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness:
Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord, 15
and my mouth shall shew Thy praise;
for Thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it Thee, 16
Thou delightest not in 'burnt-offerings;
the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit, 17
a broken and a contrite heart, O God, shalt Thou not despise.

sprinkled over the unclean person. If the Psalmist had been guilty of murder (cp. ver. 14), such lustration would have been required by the law; hence its metaphorical use here would be appropriate. *snow.* Cp. Is. i. 18.

Ver. 8. *bones—broken*, metaphorically for 'a contrite heart' (ver. 17). Cp. § 26. vi. 2, 'heal me for my bones are vexed, my soul also is sore troubled.'

Ver. 12. *free, i. e.* freely imparting its gifts: cp. Glossary 'free.'

Ver. 14. *blood-guiltiness*, perhaps alluding to the special sin, which gave occasion to the Psalm.

Ver. 17. *the sacrifice—spirit.* Cp. § 15. iv. 5.

V. *in hope that when the Temple is restored, he may there repeat his thanksgiving.*

O be favourable and gracious unto Sion, 18
 build Thou the walls of Jerusalem!
 Then shalt Thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, 19
 with burnt-offerings and oblations;
 then shall they offer young bullocks upon Thine altar.

Ver. 18. The connexion between the last two verses and the rest of the Psalm is not obvious. As we have seen from § 72. xl. 8, 9; § 73. lxix. 31, 32, the idea, that the outward act can be dispensed with so long as the will be there, is not strange to this time; but why then does the Psalmist recur to the thought of ceremonial sacrifice? Because he yields to the force of circumstances, and submits to the fact that he cannot offer his thanksgiving publicly in these troublous times, yet when Sion shall have been restored, he will not abuse the law of liberty by neglecting to join his private gratitude to the public thanksgiving.

Ver. 19. *of righteousness, i. e. a sacrifice rightly and duly performed.*

§ 76. PSALM LXXI.*

THE Psalmist speaks the language of the Captivity; at the close of a life of varied fortune¹ he is again threatened with violence from his enemies². Yet in this new danger so clear is the recollection of past deliverances, so entire the resignation to God's will, that the thought of peril is almost lost in a continuous stream of thanksgiving. The Psalm gives a noble picture of a mind trained by the discipline of the past to calm trust in God, and able even in the infirmity of age to face unmoved the prospect of a violent end.

I. *The Psalmist calleth on God to protect him as of old;*

In Thee, O Jehovah, have I put my trust, 1
 let me never be put to confusion!
 but rid me and deliver me in Thy righteousness,
 incline Thine ear unto me and save me!

Vv. 1, 2. These verses are taken with slight alteration from § 57. xxxi. 1—3. *rid.* Cp. Glossary.

* See Introduction, p. 176.

¹ v. 18,

² v. 9,

be Thou my strong hold whereunto I may alway resort, 2
 Thou hast given commandment to save me,
 for Thou art my strong rock and my castle!
 deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the ungodly, 3
 out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man!
 for Thou, O Lord Jehovah, art the thing that I long for, 4
 Thou art my hope even from my youth;
 through Thee have I been holden up ever since I was born, 5
 Thou art He that hath blessed me from my mother's womb,
 my praise shall be always of Thee.
 I am become as it were a monster unto many, 6
 but my sure trust is in Thee;
 my mouth is filled with Thy praise, 7
 and with Thy glory all the day long;
 cast me not away in the time of age, 8
 forsake me not when my strength faileth me.

II. *describeth his need, his patience and his thankfulness;*

Mine enemies spake against me, 9
 they that lay wait for my life took counsel together,
 saying, 'God hath forsaken him;
 'persecute him and take him, for there is none to deliver him.'
 —go not far from me, O God, 10
 my God, haste Thee to help me!
 let them be confounded and perish that are against my soul, 11
 let them be covered with shame and dishonour that seek to
 do me evil!—
 but as for me, I will patiently abide alway, 12
 and will praise Thee more and more;

Ver. 5. *womb*. Cp. § 69. xxii. 9, 10.

Ver. 6. *monster*, *i.e.* prodigy; see Glossary. So unnatural and incredible have been his sufferings that he is looked on as a prodigy of wickedness; the same feeling is represented by the attitude of Job's friends (viii. 6, xi. 14).

Ver. 8. *cast*. Cp. § 75. li. 11.

my mouth shall speak of Thy righteousness, 13
 and of Thy salvation every day;
 for I know no end thereof!
 I will come with the mighty acts of the Lord Jehovah, 14
 and will make mention of Thy goodness only.
 Thou, O God, hast taught me from my youth up, 15
 I have ever been telling of Thy wondrous works;
 forsake me not, O God, in mine old age when I am grayheaded, 16
 until I have shewed Thy strength unto this generation,
 and Thy power to all them that are yet for to come!

III. *appealeth to the divine righteousness and maketh a vow of praise.*

As Thy righteousness, O God, is very high, 17
 and great are the things that Thou hast done,
 —O God, who is like unto Thee?
 O what great troubles and adversities hast Thou shewed us! 18
 and yet wilt Thou turn and refresh us,
 yea, and bring us from the deep of the earth again!—
 if Thou shalt bring me to great honour, 19
 and comfort me on every side,
 so will I praise Thee and Thy faithfulness, 20
 O God, upon the lute;
 unto Thee will I sing upon the harp, O Thou Holy One of Israel!
 my lips shall rejoice, yea, unto Thee will I sing, 21
 and so doth my soul whom Thou hast delivered!
 my tongue also shall talk of Thy righteousness all the day long, 22
 for they are confounded and brought to shame that seek to
 do me evil!

Ver. 14. *I will come with*, *i.e.* will bring into the Temple as an offering to Thee the praise of Thy deeds. Cp. § 72. xl. 9, 10, 'then said I, lo I come with the roll of the book, that is written for me,' and note.

Ver. 17. He vows (ver. 20), by the two attributes of God, which can aid him in his present distress, viz. His righteousness and greatness, that in expectation of deliverance he will ever praise God.

Ver. 18. *us*, *i.e.* the Psalmist and his people; his individuality is becoming more and more merged in the common nationality.

§§ 77, 78. PSALMS XXV, XXXIV.

THESE two Psalms are didactic poems, marked as the work of the same author by a peculiar alphabetical arrangement.

§ 77. PSALM XXV.

I. *A declaration of God's goodness to the holy and a prayer for growth in holiness.*

After Thee, O Jehovah, i
doth my soul seek, O my God!
Behold, in Thee is my trust, let me not be confounded,
neither let mine enemies triumph over me!
Confounded are they that transgress without a cause, 2
but they that hope in Thee shall never be ashamed!
Direct me in Thy ways, O Jehovah, 3
and teach me Thy statutes!
Exercise me in Thy truth, for Thou art the God of my health, 4
in Thee hath been my hope all the day long!
Go not back, O Jehovah, from Thy tender mercies 5
and Thy lovingkindnesses which have been ever of old!
Hold not the sins of my youth in remembrance, O Jehovah, 6
but in Thy mercy think Thou upon me, for Thy goodness!
In Jehovah is mercy and truth, 7
therefore will He teach sinners in the way;
Jehovah guideth the afflicted in judgment, 8
such as are afflicted, them shall He learn His way;

Ver. 7. In the alphabetical arrangement of the original no verse begins with the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet, but the full number of twenty-two verses usual to alphabetical psalms is made up by the repetition of the 17th letter at the beginning of the last verse. This peculiarity has been imitated here to keep up the similarity of structure between this and the 34th Psalm. Cp. note on the alphabetical structure, § 61, and Introduction to § 130.

Ver. 8. *judgment*, i.e. maintains their case before the judge. *His way*, i.e. His government, by which he helps the oppressed and punishes the oppressor.

Lovingkindness and truth are in His ways, 9
 unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies;
Merciful be Thou, O Jehovah, for Thy name's sake 10
 unto my sin, for it is great!

II.

Note thou the man that trusteth in Jehovah, 11
 him doth He teach the way that he should choose;
Only he shall dwell at ease; 12
 his seed shall inherit the land.
Plain is the secret of Jehovah to them that fear Him; 13
 and His covenant is to teach them;
Raised are mine eyes unto Jehovah, 14
 for He shall pluck my feet out of the net;
Send help unto me and have mercy upon me, 15
 for I am desolate and in misery!
Troubles have taken hold of me; O set me at large, 16
 and bring Thou me out of my sorrows;
Upon my adversity and misery turn Thou Thine eyes, 17
 and forgive me all my sin!
Verily, many are they that are mine enemies, 18
 and they bear a tyrannous hate against me;
Watch Thou over my soul and deliver me; 19
 let me not be confounded, for I have put my trust in Thee!
Yea, let perfectness and righteous dealing wait upon me; 20
 for my hope hath been in Thee!
Save Israel, O God, 21
 out of all his troubles!

§ 78. PSALM XXXIV.

An exhortation to praise God for His mercies.

A lway will I give thanks unto Jehovah,	1
and His praise shall be ever in my mouth!	
B oast thou in Jehovah, O my soul,	2
for the humble shall hear thereof and be glad!	
C ome with me and praise Jehovah,	3
let us magnify His name together!	
D iligently I sought Jehovah and He heard me;	4
yea, He delivered me out of all my fear.	
E nlightened are all they that have an eye unto Him;	5
their faces are not ashamed.	
G reat was the crying of the poor and Jehovah heard him,	6
yea, and saved him out of all his troubles.	
H elp cometh from Jehovah to them that fear Him,	7
for His angel campeth round about them.	
J ehovah is gracious; O taste and see,	8
how blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.	
K eepest the fear of Jehovah, ye that are His saints,	9
for they that fear Him lack nothing.	
L ions do lack and suffer hunger,	10
but they that seek Jehovah want not any thing that is good.	
M y children, hearken unto me,	11
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.	
N eeds must the man that lusteth to live	12
and would fain see good days,	
O rders his tongue from evil,	13
and his lips that they speak no guile.	
P ut away evil and do good,	14
seek peace and ensue it.	

Ver. 6. *the poor*, i.e. the Psalmist. See Glossary.Ver. 7. *angel*, i.e. the angelic host encompassing them as a guard. Cp. § 117. xci. 11.

- R**espect hath Jehovah unto the righteous, 15
 and His ears are open unto their prayers.
Set against the wicked is the face of Jehovah 16
 to root out the remembrance of them from the earth.
The righteous cried and Jehovah heard them, 17
 and delivered them out of all their troubles;
Unto them that are of a contrite heart is Jehovah nigh, 18
 He saveth such as be of an humble spirit.
Verily, many are the troubles of the righteous, 19
 but Jehovah delivereth him out of all.
Watched of Him are all his bones, 20
 so that not one of them is broken.
Yet misfortune slayeth the ungodly, 21
 and they that hate the righteous are desolate.
Surely Jehovah delivereth the souls of His servants, 22
 all they that put their trust in Him shall not be destitute.

§ 79. PSALM CII.

AS the Psalmist lingered fondly amid the ruins¹ of his city, he was naturally led to contrast the perishable things around with the imperishable nature of God. This thought of God's eternity² leads him to feel that His promises cannot fail and to picture the prostrate Sion rising as the queen of a converted world³.

*The prayer of the afflicted when he is faint,
 and poureth forth his sighing unto Jehovah;*

I.

Hear my prayer, O Jehovah, 20.1
 and let my crying come unto Thee!

¹ v. 14. Cp. Lam. iv. 1, 2.² v. 26.³ vv. 15, 22, 28, and cp. § 63, note.

hide not Thy face from me in the time of my trouble, 2
 incline Thine ear unto me when I call;
 O hear me and that right soon!
 for my days are consumed away like smoke, 3
 and my bones are burnt up like a firebrand,
 my heart is smitten down and withered like grass, 4
 so that I forget to eat my bread;
 because of the voice of my groaning 5
 my bones cleave unto my flesh;
 I am become like a pelican in the wilderness, 6
 and like an owl that is in the desert,
 I sleep not and am become like a sparrow, 7
 that sitteth alone upon the house-top;
 mine enemies revile me all the day long, 8
 and they that are mad upon me make my name a curse.

II.

For I have eaten ashes as it were bread, 9
 and mingled my drink with weeping;

The prayer. The superscription of this Psalm differs in style from that of any other, and may best be compared with Hab. iii. 1. See Supplement. It seems to be written by the Psalmist himself and is therefore included in the Psalm. See Appendix B.

Ver. 4. *so that I forget to eat.* His sorrow is so great that he cannot eat. Cp. 1 Sam. i. 7; 2 Sam. xii. 17, 21.

Ver. 5. *cleave.* For this sign of extreme emaciation, cp. Job xix. 20, 'My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my flesh,' and Lam. iv. 8, 'Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets; their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.'

Ver. 6. *pelican—owl.* These birds are frequently used by the Hebrews to convey the idea of loneliness and desolation. Cp. Job xxx. 29, 'I am a brother to jackals, and a companion to owls.' The owl is called in Arabic 'the mother of ruins.'

Ver. 8. *curse, i.e.* use my name as a proverb in their oaths. Cp. Is. lxxv. 15; Num. v. 21; Zech. viii. 13; Jer. xxix. 22, 'And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire.'

Ver. 9. *ashes—bread,* a hyperbolic form of expression for 'affliction is my daily portion.' For similar expressions, cp. Is. xlv. 20; Lam. iii. 15, 16, 'He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. He hath also broken my teeth with gravel-stones, he hath covered me with ashes,' See Supplement.

and that, because of Thine indignation and wrath, 10
 for Thou hast taken me up and cast me away;
 my days are like a shadow that declineth, 11
 and I am withered like grass:
 but Thy throne, O Jehovah, is established for ever, 12
 and Thy remembrance unto all generations;
 Thou wilt arise and have mercy upon Sion, 13
 —for it is time that Thou be gracious unto her,
 yea, the time is come;
 and why? Thy servants take pleasure even in her stones, 14
 and it pitieth them to see her in the dust;—
 so shall the heathen fear the name of Jehovah, 15
 and all the kings of the earth Thy majesty.

III.

For—‘Jehovah hath built up Sion, 16
 ‘and hath made His glory to appear;
 ‘He hath turned Him to the prayer of the poor destitute, 17
 ‘and hath not despised their desire—’
 let this be written by those that come after! 18
 and let the people that shall be born praise Jehovah;
 for He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary, 19
 out of the heaven did Jehovah behold the earth,
 that He might hear the mourning of such as are in captivity, 20
 and deliver the children appointed unto death,
 that they may declare the name of Jehovah in Sion, 21
 and His praise in Jerusalem,

Ver. 10. *cast me away*. The metaphor is the same as in Is. xxii. 17, 18; the Psalmist is lifted up on high and then tossed away like a ball.

Ver. 11. *shadow that declineth*. Cp. § 74. cix. 22, and note. Here the allusion is to the rapidity with which shadows lengthen and disappear at the close of day.

Ver. 15. *heathen—kings of the earth*. For the amplification of this hope, which was intensified after the captivity, see Zech. xiv. 9, 16, and § 63. lxxii. note.

Ver. 18. *this, i. e.* the quotation of the thanksgiving contained in the two preceding verses.

Ver. 20. *children appointed unto death*, literally, children of death, *i. e.* the dying.

when the nations are gathered together, 22
and the kingdoms, to serve Jehovah.

IV. *The Psalmist is comforted by the thought of the eternity of God.*

He brought down my strength in my journey, 23
He shortened my days;
then I said; 'O my God, take me not away in the midst of 24
'mine age;
'as for Thy years, they endure throughout all generations!
'Thou in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth,
'and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; 25
'they shall perish but Thou shalt endure, 26
'they all shall wax old as doth a garment,
'and as a vesture shalt Thou change them and they shall be 27
changed,
'but Thou art the same,
'and Thy years shall not fail;
'the children of Thy servants shall continue, 28
'and their seed shall stand fast in Thy sight.'

Ver. 23. *journey, i. e. the journey of life.*

§§ 80—82. PSALMS LXXIII, LXXVII, XCIV.

THE prolonged duration of the Captivity naturally increased the depression of the faithful Israelites, but at the same time they learnt more and more to rest on the consolatory belief that temporary misfortune was no proof of final rejection, that there were blessings to be won from chastisement, and that in His own time God would deliver them once again, as He had delivered them from Egypt of yore¹.

¹ lxxvii. 5, 11—20.

This struggle between despair and hope is strikingly depicted in the three following Psalms. The Psalmist is as yet unenlightened by any clear prospect of a future life in which the manifold inequalities of the present might be redressed; he is sorely perplexed¹ by the dark enigma of that age, the prosperity of the wicked; yet he is beginning to feel his way to a discernment of the truth, that while the success of evil is apparent and momentary², the triumph of good is real and final; he even catches a glimpse of the still higher truth, revealed in the pages of Job, that communion with God is a blessing higher than happiness and that the consciousness of possessing this gives a joy with which the pleasures of mere temporal prosperity are wholly incommensurable³.

§ 80. PSALM LXXIII.

Truly God is loving unto Israel, 1
even unto such as are of a clean heart!

I. The Psalmist confesseth his perplexity at the good success of the wicked,

But as for me—my feet were almost gone,	2
my steps had well nigh slipt;	
and why? I was envious at the proud,	3
I did also see the ungodly in such prosperity,	
how they are in no pain,	4
but their body is lusty and strong,	
they come in no misfortune like other folk,	5
neither are they plagued like other men.	

Vv. 4, 5. *how they are in no pain.* The abrupt change of tense may be explained by supposing the Psalmist to be quoting the actual words of a previous Psalm, according to a common usage of this period. Cp. § 72. xl. 5.

¹ lxxiii. 2—5, 20, 21; lxxvii. 3, 4.

² Cp. lxxiii. 24, 25, with Job xxviii. 12—20.

³ lxxiii. 17, 18, 19.

Therefore is their neck so encompassed with pride, 6
 and they are clothed with cruelty as with a raiment,
 their wickedness overfloweth from the fatness of their heart, 7
 they are swollen with their own imaginations,
 they scoff, and their talking is of oppression and malice, 8
 they talk proudly as from on high,
 for they stretch forth their mouth unto heaven, 9
 and their tongue goeth through the earth.

by which the faithful are drawn after them,

Therefore fall His people unto them, 10
 yea, they drink their fill of the cup;
 'tush,' say they, 'how should God perceive it 11
 'and is there knowledge in the most High?
 'lo, these are the ungodly, 12
 'these prosper in the world and these have riches in pos-
 session!

Ver. 6. *their neck is encompassed with pride*, as with a necklace, so A. V. 'compasseth them about as a chain.' Cp. also Is. iii. 16. *raiment*. Cp. § 74. cix. 17, 18.

Ver. 7. *fatness of heart*. Cp. § 64. xvii. 10. This very luxury and prosperity breeds the proud thoughts of vv. 8, 9.

Vv. 8, 9. *from on high—heaven*. The heathen tyrants give their commands to the world, as if they were the gods of it. Compare the magnificent vision of the fall of Babylon, Is. xiv. 12, 13, 14, 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!...thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also in the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north (cp. note on § 36. xlviii. 2): I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.' *tongue*, i. e. their proud proclamations.

Ver. 10. *Therefore*, i. e. by letting the heathen remain unchecked in their prosperity. *fall His people unto them*, or more exactly, 'God alloweth His people to be led' into some temptation. *they drink their fill of the cup*, i. e. of the cup of treachery to God, cp. *Christian Year*, 2nd Sunday after Epiphany,

Such is the world's gay garish feast,
 in her first charming bowl
 infusing all that fires the breast,
 and cheats the unstable soul.

Literally, 'they drink water in full (measure).' God's people, tempted by the offer of the prosperity which the godless vaunt as the reward of apostasy, drink in the dangerous doctrines as eagerly as a thirsty traveller would drink water from a well. Cp. Job xv. 16, 'drinketh iniquity like water,' and Prov. iv. 17, xxvi. 6.

‘then have I cleansed my heart in vain,
 ‘and washed mine hands in innocency,
 ‘all the day long have I been punished, 13
 ‘and chastened every morning!’

II. *till at length his eyes are opened to see as God seeth;*

Yea, and I had almost said even as they, 14
 but lo! then I should have betrayed the generation of Thy
 children:
 then thought I to understand this,— 15
 but it was too hard for me;
 until I went into the sanctuary of God, 16
 then understood I the end of these men,
 namely how Thou dost set them in slippery places, 17
 and castest them down and destroyest them.

Oh how suddenly do they consume, 18
 perish and come to a fearful end!
 yea, even like as a dream when one awaketh, 19
 so makest Thou their image to vanish at Thy presence!
 when my heart was grieved, 20
 and it went even through my reins,

Vv. 11—13. *Then have I.* Here the speech of those who are tempted to fall away unto the wicked, introduced by the words *say they* (ver. 11), is made more dramatic by being put into the mouth of one of them. The temptation of the still faithful Israelite depicted in these graphic words lies in this thought—that he has subjected himself to the discipline of God’s law in vain, if blessings are thus showered on the head of the apostate.

Ver. 14. *I should have betrayed, i. e.* by not upholding the faith of a true Israelite, and thereby adding to the temptations of the remnant of the faithful.

Ver. 16. *until I went, i. e.* until I was admitted unto the secret counsels of God’s dealings, and learnt that the heathen are only raised to such prosperity, that the example of their final fall may strike more terror into the world.

Ver. 19. *dream.* Cp. § 34. xc. 5, and Job xx. 8, 9, ‘He shall fly away as a dream and shall not be found: yea he shall be chased away as a vision of the night: the eye also which saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.’ *at Thy presence, i. e.* when Thou arisest in judgment.

Ver. 20. *was grieved, i. e.* at the prosperity of the wicked.

then was I foolish and without understanding, 21
even as it were a beast before Thee.

he declarerh the unchangeable trust in God

Nevertheless I am alway by Thee! 22

Thou hast holden me by my right hand,
Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, 23
and shalt bring me unto honour.

Whom have I in heaven but Thee? 24
and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison
with Thee!

my flesh and my heart faileth; 25
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

III. gained by the revelation of His dealings.

For lo! they that forsake Thee shall perish, 26
Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee:
but it is good for me to hold me fast by God: 27
in the Lord Jehovah do I put my trust,
that I may speak praises of all Thy works!

Ver. 21. *foolish.* Cp. § 66. xlix, 'Man in his glory so he have no understanding is like unto the beasts that perish;' lack of understanding is here equivalent to unfaithfulness to God.

§ 81. PSALM LXXVII.*

THE Psalmist depicts the struggle of his life as centred in a single night of anguish¹; he clothes in vivid words the thoughts that thrilled his soul, while despair² and hope³ were still battling for mastery, and thus lays the history of his life before us in a dialogue⁴ between his old and his new Self. An abrupt transition⁵ marks the

* See Introduction, §§ 80—82.

³ vv. 10, 11, 12.

¹ vv. 2, 6.

⁴ See note.

² vv. 7, 8, 9.

⁵ v. 10.

dawn of the new hope, 'What if God be still ruling as before, and His hand be in our captivity now, as it was in Israel's bondage of yore? What if we too be destined to have as glorious an Exodus as theirs¹? The weight is taken off the Psalmist's soul. he suddenly becomes a new man; and while apparently engrossed in the past, he is carried away into a song of triumph² which is really an unconscious prophecy of the future.

I. *The Psalmist quoteth his former Song of Despair;*

- 'I will cry unto God with my voice, . 1
 'even unto God will I cry and He shall hearken unto me.'
 In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord, 2
 I stretched out my hand and ceased not in the night-season;
 my soul refused comfort:
 'when I think upon God, I am in heaviness, 3
 'I muse in mine heart and my spirit waxeth faint!'
 Thou didst hold fast mine eyes from slumber, 4
 I was troubled and spake nothing,
 I considered the days of old, 5
 and the years that are past:

Structure. This Psalm has two parts. The first part, consisting of the first 12 verses, is mainly composed of quotations from a former psalm, which depicted a struggle between despair and hope in a night of anguish, and described how relief came from remembering God's deliverances in the past. The 2nd, 4th, and 5th verses describe the feelings of the Psalmist at the time of composing this former Psalm; the first part thus forms a preface to the 2nd (vv. 13—20), which is a hymn of triumph springing from the words 'my talking shall be of Thy doings.'

Ver. 2. *I stretched out mine hand, i. e.* in entreaty to God. Cp. § 119. xliv. 21, 'if we have forgotten the name of our God, and holden up our hands to any strange god.' Also § 58. lxxxviii. 9; Job xi. 13; Lam. ii. 18, 19; Exod. xvii. 10.

Ver. 3. *when I think upon God, i. e.* upon His dealings, as yet unintelligible. Cp. § 80. lxxiii.

Ver. 4. *Thou didst hold fast mine eyelids, i. e.* 'I could not close them in sleep, so perplexed was I.'

¹ v. 11 and § 114. lxxviii.

² vv. 13—20.

‘let me call to remembrance my song in the night 6
 ‘and commune with mine heart!’
 —and my spirit enquired thus within itself:—

‘Will the Lord absent Himself for ever, 7
 ‘and will He be no more entreated?’
 ‘is His mercy clean gone for ever, 8
 ‘and His promise come utterly to an end for evermore?’
 ‘hath God forgotten to be gracious, 9
 ‘will He shut up His lovingkindness in displeasure?’

which in the thought of God's eternity becometh a Psalm of Faith,

Then said I:—‘this is my affliction, 10
 ‘even during the years of the right hand of the most Highest!’
 ‘I will think of the works of Jehovah, 11
 ‘yea, I will call to mind Thy wonders of old time,
 ‘I will sing also of all Thy works, 12
 ‘and my talking shall be of Thy doings.’

II. *and he breaketh into a Hymn of Praise for the deliverance at the Red Sea.*

Thy way, O God, is holy; 13
 who is so great a god as our God?
 Thou art the God that doeth wonders, 14
 and hast declared Thy power among the nations;
 Thou didst mightily deliver Thy people, 15
 even the sons of Jacob and Joseph:

Ver. 10. *this is my affliction, even during the years of the right hand, i.e.* ‘this my suffering lasts, notwithstanding that Jehovah still rules the world.’ This reminds him of the deeds of Jehovah in the time of old, and gives him hope of a second Exodus, a glorious march across the desert which now divides him from his home.

Ver. 15. *Joseph*, as the father of Ephraim and Manasseh, is here the representative of the Northern kingdom. Ephraim is used in the prophets in the same way, as being the most powerful tribe of the Northern kingdom.

the waters saw Thee, O God, the waters saw Thee and were afraid; 16
 the depths also were troubled;
 the clouds poured out water, the air thundered, 17
 and Thine arrows went abroad;
 the voice of Thy thunder was heard in the whirlwind, light- 18
 nings shone upon the world;
 the earth was moved and shook withal.

Thy way was in the sea, 19
 and Thy paths in the great waters,
 and Thy footsteps were not known,—
 Thou leddest Thy people like sheep 20
 by the hand of Moses and Aaron!

Vv. 16—18. For the description of God's deliverance under the figure of a thunderstorm compare the song of Deborah (Judges v. 4, in Supplement of Hebrew Lyrics); § 114. lxviii. 7, 8, and § 12. xviii.

Ver. 19. *footsteps were not known*, i. e. because the waters closed again upon the path, by which He led them through the Red sea.

§ 82. PSALM XCIV.*

I. *The Prophet crieth for judgment on the oppressor,*

O God, Jehovah, to whom vengeance belongeth, 1
 Thou God to whom vengeance belongeth, shew Thyself!
 arise, Thou judge of the world, 2
 and reward the proud after their deserving!
 how long, O Jehovah, shall the ungodly— 3
 how long shall the ungodly triumph?
 how long shall all wicked doers speak so disdainfully, 4
 and make such proud boasting?

* Cp. § 80—82, Introduction.

they smite down Thy people, O Jehovah, 5
 and trouble Thine heritage,
 they murder the widow and the stranger, 6
 and put the fatherless to death,
 and yet they say, 'tush, Jehovah shall not see, 7
 'neither shall the God of Jacob regard it!'

II. and warneth him of the folly of trying to escape the eye of God.

Take heed, ye unwise among the people; 8
 O ye fools, when will ye understand?
 He that planted the ear, shall He not hear, 9
 or He that made the eye, shall He not see?
 He that chasteneth the nations, shall He not punish, 10
 even He that teacheth man knowledge?
 Jehovah knoweth the thoughts of man, 11
 that they are but vain:
 blessed s the man whom Thou chastenest, Jehovah, 12
 and teachest him in Thy law,
 that Thou mayest give him patience in time of adversity, 13
 until a pit be digged up for the ungodly!
 for Jehovah will not reject His people, 14
 neither will He forsake His inheritance;
 but judgment shall turn again unto right, 15
 and all such as are true of heart shall follow Him.

III. In remembrance of God's past mercies he declareth his trust in Him.

Who will stand up for me against the wicked, 16
 who will take my part against the evil-doers?
 if Jehovah had not helped me, 17
 it had not failed but my soul had gone down into silence:
 but when I say, 'my foot hath slipped,' 18
 Thy mercy, Jehovah, doth hold me up;

Ver. 1. *pit*, *i. e.* a pitfall to catch them, a common metaphor for retribution, taken from hunting. Cp. Ezek. xix. 4, 'the lion was taken in their pit,' and 8.

in the multitude of the sorrows that I have in my heart 19
 Thy comforts refresh my soul;
 shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, 20
 which imagineth mischief as a law?
 they gather them together against the soul of the righteous, 21
 and condemn the innocent blood,
 but Jehovah is my defence, / 22
 and my God is the rock of my refuge,
 and He requiteth them with their own wickedness, 23
 and destroyeth them for their malice,
 yea, Jehovah our God doth destroy them!

Ver. 20. *throne of iniquity*, an unrighteous judgment-seat, where decisions are regulated by the code of malice, which seeks only the misery of others.

83. PSALM LXXXII.

THE ideas of which the germ is first seen in the 52nd Psalm¹ are developed more fully in this, which is conceived in the spirit of prophecy². The Psalmist sees not as men see, for his eye is fixed only on the throne of God³. He hears the viceroys or saraps of a vast empire claiming for their rule, as Rabshakeh did of old⁴, the divine attributes of eternity⁵ and omnipotence, but he knows by prophetic insight that the possession of divine justice is the only test of

¹ § 46.

² This Psalm must be closely compared with the words of the contemporary prophet Ezekiel (xxviii. 2—10).

³ Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord God; 'Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas;' yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;... behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness; they shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, 'I am God'? but thou shalt be a man, and no god in the hand of him that slayeth thee: thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers; for I have spoken it,' saith the Lord God.' Cp. also ib. vv. 14, 25, 26; xxxi. 3, 15—18.

⁴ 2^d v. 1.

⁵ 2 Kings xviii. 33, 35.

⁶ Cp. v. 6 with v. 7.

the possession of divine power. Trying them by this touchstone he sees their gold to be but dross, and that the gorgeous fabric of their power is ready to crumble away¹ at the breath of the displeasure of God. Thus while they claim reverence for their rights, he reminds them of their duties. He tells them that their exercise of power is corrupt and selfish, and treats their pretensions to divinity with the bitterest irony². They may claim indeed to be gods, but they are gods as perishable as mortals, as powerless as the dumb idols which they boast to have overthrown³; and in the grand judgment in which the false gods will be brought face to face with the True, their claims to rule and empire will be thrust aside with scorn, and their heathen subjects will be called into the fold of the Shepherd of the world, the God of Israel⁴.

God calleth the rulers of the world to judgment:

God standeth in the congregation of princes,	1
He giveth judgment among gods;	
How long will ye judge unjustly,	2
and accept the persons of the ungodly?	
Defend the poor and fatherless,	3
see that such as are in need and necessity have right,	

Ver. 1. *in the congregation of princes*, of 'the mighty' in the Authorised Version; more literally, 'in gods assembly,' *i.e.* either 'the assembly that God holds' or 'the assembly of gods;' by 'gods' or *princes* are meant the heathen princes or rulers who oppress the Israelites in their captivity. Cp. ver. 8, and § 53. lviii. Introduction and notes. *He giveth judgment*. For a similar picture cp. Is. iii. 13—15, 'The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people: the Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of His people, and the princes thereof;... 'what mean ye that ye beat My people to pieces and grind the faces of the poor?' saith the Lord God of hosts.'

Ver. 2. *accept the persons*. Cp. Deut. i. 17, 'Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man.' So to express the impartiality of Divine justice it is said that God 'accepteth no man's person.'

¹ v. 7.

² Cp. § 53. lviii.

³ Cp. 2 Kings xix. 18.

⁴ v. 8.

deliber the outcast and poor, 4
 save them from the hand of the ungodly!

when they turn a deaf ear to His appeal, He pronounceth final sentence upon them:

They will not be learned nor understand, 5
 but walk on still in darkness;
 all the foundations of the world are out of course.
 I said, 'ye are gods, 6
 'and ye are all the children of the most Highest;'
 but ye shall die like men, 7
 and fall all the sort of ye, O ye princes!

the Psalmist prayeth God to execute His sentence.

Arise, O God, and judge Thou the earth! 8
 for Thou shalt take all heathen to Thine inheritance!

Ver. 5. *foundations*, i.e. of social order. Cp. § 1. xi. 3, note. The perversion of justice produces anarchy in the state.

Ver. 6. *I said, 'ye are gods.'* For the meaning of this title cp. § 16. ii. 7, note: for similar false assumptions cp. the description of the courtiers of Darius the Mede (Dan. v.), and the title of 'Divus,' which the Roman emperors arrogated to themselves. As justice was the highest virtue in the ancient world, judges were looked upon as the very oracles and expounders of God's will. The office of judge was the function, which Moses specially reserved to himself, and which he only allowed to be exercised by others as his delegates, when its duties finally outran his powers: as early as Exodus, a judge was nearly synonymous with a prince (Ex. ii. 14; Num. xvi. 13), and before the establishment of the monarchy this was the only royal function which was assigned to any earthly ruler. Hence to the Israelitish mind a peculiar sanctity was always attached to the office.

Ver. 8. *all heathen.* The relation of the God of Israel to the heathen, the fact that He was Lord over all the peoples of the earth, was one of the lessons of the captivity, the greatest of the new truths, which the Psalmists and Prophets of this period were constantly teaching the Israelites the most exclusive of all nations.

§ 84. PSALM XIV OR LIII.

THE 14th and 53rd are different versions of one and the same Psalm¹.

There is a remarkable similarity in thought and expression between this and the preceding Psalm. The tone of this is sterner, and the destruction of the oppressors of Israel seems to be nearer² and more certain. It may have been written when Babylon³, the great representative of the giant powers of the heathen empires, already tottering, was waiting but the sentence of God's judgment to crumble into ruins⁴. In the great drama of the world, as unfolding before the Psalmist's eye, God is seen coming to examine the pretensions of His foes when their wickedness has reached its height.

God beholdeth the corruption of the nations

The fool hath said in his heart: 'there is no God!' 1
 corrupt are they and become abominable in their doings, 2
 there is none that doeth good.
 Jehovah looked down from heaven upon the children of men, 3
 to see if there were any that would understand
 and seek after God.

Ver. 1. *the fool*. As righteousness was equivalent to blessedness (cp. § 25. xxiii. 3, note), so wisdom or understanding was synonymous with godliness and virtue, cp. vv. 2, 3. The *fool* or 'vile person' is defined (Is. xxxii. 6) as one who 'worketh iniquity and uttereth error against Jehovah.' The heathen as idolaters were specially thus designated, cp. Deut. xxxii. 21, 'I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation,' and Wisd. i. 3.

Ver. 3. *the children of men*, i.e. the heathen as distinguished from the chosen people of God.

¹ Cp. § 24 note and App. A.

² Cp. vv. 6, 7 with § 83. lxxxii. 7, 8.

³ For a similar prophetic utterance cp. Is. xxi. 2, 6, 8, 9, 'A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam, besiege, O Media;...for thus hath the Lord said unto me, 'Go, set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth.' And he cried, 'Behold here cometh a horseman and a couple of horsemen.' And he answered and said, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen; and all the graven images of her gods He hath broken unto the ground.''

⁴ v. 6.

and rebuketh it from heaven.

But they were all gone out of the way, they were all together 4
 become abominable,
 there was none that was doing good,
 no, not one !
 Are not they without understanding that work wickedness, 8(5)
 that have eaten up *My* people as it were bread,
 and have not called upon Jehovah ?

The heathen are confounded at His word.

There were they brought into great fear, yea into a fear 9(6)
 that was no fear ;
 for God did scatter abroad their bones :

Vv. 4, 5. Between the 4th and 5th verses the Prayer-Book Version following the Vulgate and a MS. of LXX. inserts the following three verses, which are not found in the Authorised Version. 'Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues do they deceive, the poison of asps is under their lips: their mouth is full of cursing (or perjury) and deceit: their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and unhappiness is in their ways, and the way of peace do they not know. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' The fact of these three verses, which are really a cento from various Psalms, following immediately upon the quotation of the 3rd and 4th verses in the Epistle to the Romans (iii. 13—18) led the copyist into the belief that it was a continuous quotation, and he consequently inserted the three verses in the MS. of the Psalm.

Ver. 8 (5). *eating up My people as it were bread.* Cp. Jer. i. 17, 'Israel is a scattered sheep; the lions have driven him away: first, the king of Assyria hath devoured him, and last, this Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath broken his bones.' And Micah iii. 3, 'Hear, ye princes of the house of Jacob: 'Is it not for you to know judgment?...who eat the flesh of My people and flay their skin from off them; and they break their bones and chop them in pieces as for the pot, and as flesh within the caldron?'

Ver. 9 (6). *that was no fear, i.e.* was no mere fear but a stern reality; a forcible picture of the sudden destruction which would be brought by God on their present oppressors as on Assyria of old. It marks the deep impression made on the mind of the nation by the catastrophe of the great army of Sennacherib. This is the version of the 53rd Psalm; the 14th has,

'then were they afraid with a fear,
 that God was in the generation of the righteous!
 they took counsel against the poor, but ye shall see that it is vain.
 for Jehovah is his refuge!'

they took counsel against the poor and were put to confusion, because God despised them! 10 (7)

Prayer for the restitution of Israel.

O that salvation were given unto Israel out of Sion! 11 (8)
when Jehovah turneth the captivity of His people,
then shall Jacob rejoice and Israel shall be right glad.

. Ver. 10 (7). *poor, i. e.* the afflicted people of Israel.

§§ 85—108. THE PILGRIM ODES.

THE fifteen¹ Psalms which begin with the 120th and end with the 134th appear to form a smaller Psalter by themselves. They are marked by the same title 'a song of the goings up²,' which some have held to imply that they were marked by some peculiarity of an ascending rhythm, and others that they were sung on the steps of the Temple, but which their contents shew must have meant 'a song of the goings up from captivity.' They are in fact the Pilgrim Odes of the Hebrew nation, the voice of the exile who 'lifts up his eyes unto the hills of his home³,' and 'calls unto Jehovah from the deep⁴.'

As the prosperity of other nations spreads their citizens over the world as colonists or conquerors, so adversity had dispersed the Israelites among all lands as slaves in the home of the stranger. Only those who were deported into Chaldea were numerous enough to maintain anything approaching to national unity, and it was to their lot that the worst persecution fell. The measure of their fidelity was the measure also of their suffering. Any attempt to adhere to the hallowed customs of their ancestors brought mockery on them in addition to oppression. The tenderer spirits had a religious horror of defiling themselves by any contact with the unclean, but now to eat

¹ The 132nd Psalm must however be excepted, cp. § 123. The 14th, 87th, and 137th, might also be included. Cp. §§ 84, 99, 100.

² Translated in the Authorised Version 'songs of degrees,' see Appendix B. (3).

³ § 86. cxxi. 1.

⁴ § 88. cxxx. 1.

with the heathen seemed as nothing in comparison with other and deeper degradations. Some of the faithful had to drain the cup of suffering to the dregs and end a life of disappointed hopes by imprisonment, dishonour and death, while the misery of their lot was enhanced by the sight of their faithless brethren who had adopted the customs of their conquerors and were now prospering in the world and had riches in possession.

But though the community was thus outwardly destroyed, sparks of life were still smouldering within. The prophets, once the unwelcome censors of their prosperity, were now the comforters of their adversity. They had foretold the dispersion of a corrupted people and their threats of Divine vengeance had been fulfilled; they now foretold the resurrection of the purified nation from its ashes, and should not this also receive its fulfilment? Ezekiel could foresee the final victory of Israel, even when they were still under the iron hand of the king who had been the terror of Asia for half a century. The prophets had kept the fire of hope alive in their own hearts, and the occurrence of any favourable incident could not fail to rekindle it again in the hearts of the nation. Thus, when the rule of the Chaldeans became lighter under the weaker hands of Nebuchadnezzar's successors, a 'remnant' begins to gather round a centre, their spiritual feelings are quickened by union, their trust in Jehovah revives, and they long to see His religion restored once more in the Holy City.

As with these feelings in their hearts, they turned their eyes to Jerusalem when they prayed, so when they had more freedom to go where their hearts would lead them, and the deserted city was no longer guarded as at first, there were many who were ready to face the dangers of the desert if only they might revisit the scene of Jehovah's kingdom upon earth and the ruins of His temple. A Hebrew poet has enshrined the feelings of these pilgrims in the tender hymns which are collected in this series. The first of them¹ seem to express the yearning hopes of the later period of captivity: the later ones² of a time when 'the remnant' had already returned and the Temple-worship was once more established on Mount Sion.

¹ §§ 85—89. cxx. cxxi. cxxiii. cxxx. cxxxii

² §§ 90—108.

§ 85. PSALM CXX.*

THE Psalmist pictures the pilgrim passing through the desert from Babylon to his home in Palestine, beset by savage tribes¹, who have no reverence for the sanctity of a treaty.

The pilgrim

When I am in trouble I call upon Jehovah, 1
 and He heareth me:
 deliver my soul, O Jehovah, from among lying lips, 2
 and from the deceitful tongue!

beset by treacherous tribes

What shall He give or do unto thee, 3
 thou false tongue,
 thou that art as sharp arrows of the mighty,
 and as hot burning coals!

calleth upon God.

Woe is me that I am constrained to dwell with Meshech, 4
 and to have my habitation in the tents of Kedar!
 my soul hath long dwelt among them 5
 that are enemies unto peace:
 I labour for peace, but when I speak unto them thereof, 6
 they make them ready for battle.

Ver. 2. *deliver my soul*, i.e. save my life from the treachery of these Bedouin tribes.

Ver. 3. *give or do unto thee*. Compare the formula of cursing, 'God do so to thee and more also.' 1 Sam. iii. 17. The *arrows* are often interpreted as the reward of the false tongue, but cp. § 52. lvii. 5, 'whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword,' and § 54. lix. 7, 'swords are in their lips,' where swords and arrows are the types of the tongue of a foe. Cp. also Jer. ix. 8. *hot burning coals*, in the Authorised Version, 'coals of juniper;' more correctly, of broom. Burchardt, the Syrian traveller, mentions that the root of the broom was used for fires in the desert, and retained its heat for a considerable time. The *tongue* is spoken of as a fire in James iii. 6.

Ver. 4. *Meshech and Kedar*, two tribes mentioned as being far from Jerusalem, and on account of their remoteness considered types of barbarism. *Meshech*, the Moschi of Herodotus, a tribe in the extreme North (dwelling on the skirts of the Caucasus), and so contrasted with *Kedar* or Arabia (Is. xxi. 13, 16) on the South; as if they were the Scylla and Charybdis of a passage through the desert. *Meshech* appears as an ally of Magog, i.e. of the Scythian hordes, in Ezekiel xxxviii. 2. See Gen. x. 2.

* See Introduction, p. 221.

¹ v. 5.

§ 86. PSALM CXXI.*

THE exile sighs for the hills of his home¹: he sees no sign of help, yet with the name of the Creator, the Keeper of Israel, for his talisman², he wins his way from doubt to trust, from inward conflict to peace.

The metaphors here, as in the last Psalm, speak of the special dangers of the desert, heat of the burning sun by day³ and perils from lawless tribes by night⁴.

The exile yearning for help

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills;	1
‘Oh, whence cometh my help?	
my help cometh from Jehovah,	2
who hath made heaven and earth.’	
Will he suffer thy foot to be moved?	3
and He that keepeth thee, shall He sleep?	
behold, He that keepeth Israel	4
shall neither slumber nor sleep!	

hath assurance that God watcheth over his journey.

Jehovah Himself is thy keeper,	5
Jehovah is a shelter upon thy right hand,	
so that the sun shall not burn thee by day,	6
nor the moon by night:	
Jehovah shall preserve thee from all evil,	7
yea, it is even He that shall keep thy soul;	
Jehovah shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in	8
from this time forth for evermore!	

Ver. 1. *hills, i. e.* of Palestine. The exile is yearning for the mountains of Israel, cp. Nahum i. 15, and Ezek. vi. 3, xxxiv. 13, xxxvi. 4. *whence cometh.* The thought in these lines is ‘I long for my native hills; Who will guide me to them? God.’ Cp. § 3. xxiv. 8, 10.

Vv. 3, 4. *keepeth thee, i. e.* as the sentinel of the nightly encampment.

Ver. 5. *shelter* (or shade) against the rays of the sun. Compare ‘abide under the shadow of the Almighty,’ § 117. xci. 1, where the idea is expanded (1—14).

Ver. 6. *the moon.* The idea of the baneful influence of the *moon* is common in the East.

Ver. 8. *going out—coming in.* A common expression in the Bible for the whole daily life.

* See Introduction, p. 221.

¹ v. 1.

² vv. 2, 3, 4.

³ vv. 5, 6.

⁴ vv. 3, 4.

§ 87. PSALM CXXIII.*

A SIGH of the exiles for their return: they are waiting in patience for the summons of the Almighty.

The exile in patient longing awaiteth the summons to return.

Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes,	1
O Thou that dwellest in the heavens!	
behold, even as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters,	
and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress:	
even so our eyes wait upon Jehovah our God,	2
until He have mercy upon us.	
Have mercy upon us, O Jehovah, have mercy upon us,	3
for we are utterly despised;	
our soul is filled with the scornful reproof of the wealthy,	4
and with the despitefulness of the proud!	

Ver. 1. *look unto the hand*, i.e. as slaves wait for their master's hand to beckon them. The expression is especially appropriate in the mouth of one working among the slave-owners of Babylon.

Ver. 4. *wealthy*, more exactly 'those that are at ease.' (A. V.)

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

§ 88. PSALM CXXX.*

WITH a patriot's feelings the Psalmist sees his own weal and woe in the fortunes of his suffering brethren; he depicts himself as a sentinel at his post, longing for the sun of Jehovah's mercy to rise and chase away the dark night of captivity.

The exile prayeth for deliverance.

Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Jehovah!	1
Lord, hear my voice! O let Thine ears consider well	
the voice of my complaint!	2
if Thou, Jehovah, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss,	3
O Lord, who may abide it?	
but there is mercy with Thee,	4
therefore shalt Thou be feared!	
 I look for Jehovah, my soul doth wait for Him,	5
in His word is my trust;	
my soul waiteth for Jehovah,	6
more than they that watch for the morning, I say, than they	7
that watch for the morning.	
O Israel, trust in Jehovah!	
for with Jehovah there is mercy and with Him is plenteous	
redemption;	
and HE shall redeem Israel	8
from all his sins!	

Ver. 4. *feared*. This is a time when the *fear* of God will be better promoted by an exhibition of His gentler attributes of loving *mercy* and faithfulness than by a further revelation of His power.

Ver. 5. *His word, i. e.* His promise of blessing and deliverance. Cp. § 51. lvi. 5, 10.

Ver. 6. *more, i. e.* more eagerly than the sentinel waiteth for the dawn of day, which is to free him from his wearisome post.

Ver. 8. *from* the penalty of the *sins* of their prosperity, for which they are now suffering retribution in their exile. Cp. Jer. ix. 13—16.

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

§ 89. PSALM CXXXI.*

THE Psalmist has learnt from adversity the lesson of submission, and counsels the nation to fit itself in like manner for winning the blessings which are still in store.

Peace in resignation.

Jehovah! I am not high-minded, I have no proud looks, 1
 I do not exercise myself in great matters which are too 2
 high for me;
 but I refrain my soul and keep it still, 3
 like as a child that is weaned resteth on his mother,
 so resteth my soul within me even as a weaned child.
 O Israel, trust in Jehovah, 4
 from this time forth for evermore.

Ver. 2. *I do not exercise myself in great matters*; I speak only of the simple duty of submission to God's will; I do not indulge in restless thoughts or visions of a great deliverance. Cp. Jer. xlv. 5.

Ver. 3. *refrain*, literally 'level.' The storm of passion is lulled to rest. *a weaned child*. As the child that is fully weaned rests quietly on its mother's bosom without yearning any longer for the breast, so the Psalmist's soul rests *within* him (or upon him), weaned from passionate longing and acquiescing in the dispensation of God. The difficulty lies in the words *within me*, which, to make the comparison accurate, should be translated 'on me,' as though a man's soul were resting on his arms, like a child on the breast of its mother.

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

BOOK IV.

*PSALMS FROM THE PERIOD OF THE
REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM.*

BOOK IV.

PSALMS FROM THE PERIOD OF THE REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM.

NATIONS do not survive dispersion. As long as they retain their country they may survive conquest and loss of freedom; but with the severance of the local tie patriotism dies, the national unity is dissolved and its members form new connexions in their new homes. So Israel melted away in Assyria. Judah alone proved indestructible.

With an unparalleled faith in the future the inspired statesmen of Judah had fearlessly acquiesced in the loss of country and home. Jeremiah seems to have deliberately given up all thought for that rational independence which Isaiah had held so dear, and to have welcomed the sharp remedy¹ of dispersion as the only cure for the growing evil of national corruption. The purchase of Hananeel's field² was but the outward symbol of a

¹ Is. i. 5.

² Jer. xxxi. 38.

deeply-rooted belief that the tie of union was not material but spiritual, and that the nation might indeed survive the loss of country, but could not survive the loss of its religion. Jeremiah maintained this belief at the cost of being taunted as a coward and imprisoned as a traitor, but the event justified the apparently aimless sacrifice of his patriotism. The plague of national corruption was stayed; and within the seventy years, the typical limit of a human lifetime, the nation had recovered its country. The blight had proved a blessing. None but a prophet's eye could have foreseen how Judah would be purified by the discipline of adversity. It is true that the series of the prophets ceased and the Canon was soon closed; but why? Because the nation had begun to learn the lessons which the prophets were appointed to teach. They had not indeed learned the deepest truth of all—the lesson of the new Covenant proclaimed by Jeremiah¹—to live not on the letter but on the spirit of revelation; but has the lesson been learned even at this day, though it has been reiterated by a greater than Jeremiah?

Some lessons however they had learned: they had learned the lesson of the Lamentations², the power of repentance as a remedy for sin; they saw the imperfections of the past and aimed at a nobler future. By separation from the Temple and its sacrifices they had learned the value of prayer; this raised them another step above the heathen. From the fall of empires³ they had learned not only the emptiness of mere power, but the vanity of idols; with the establishment of the 'houses of prayer' in the dispersion the taint of idolatry disappeared; the worship of wood and stone not merely lost its attractions, but

¹ Jer. xxxi. 33, 'I will make a new covenant, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers;...I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts.' Cp. ib. iii. 16; xxxii. 39, 40; Ezek. xi. 19.

² See Supplement, Introduction to the Lamentations.

³ §§ 35—38, Introduction.

became a butt for their scorn¹. From the Evangelical Prophet, in whom the greatest of the old prophets seemed to live once more, they had learned to look upon themselves as the ambassadors of God to the heathen; and to see that their mission was to be not the preachers only but the pattern of righteousness to mankind. Finally, with the newly awakened consciousness of their own shortcomings, they had learned that this mission could not be fulfilled till they had a king who would deliver them not only from outward oppression but from the inward thralldom of sin. The immediate need was soon to be accomplished; the prophets do not scruple to recognize the divine call of Cyrus as the reformer of Asia, the iconoclast and the destroyer of the corruptions of Babylon. Struck by the comparative purity of his faith, they might well for a moment see in him the Anointed of Jehovah, whom Israel was to help in re-organizing the world. The nation had brought Jehovah's religion into contempt by their disobedience, they must now re-establish it, not only by a local restoration at Jerusalem but by the conversion of all the nations of the world.

The results of the Captivity may be thus briefly epitomized. The nation once careless of the law were becoming worshippers of its very letter; once tempted by idolatry, they now treated it with scorn; once below the teaching of sacrifices, they had now risen to spiritual worship through prayer; once rigorously exclusive, they now saw their ideal in the king who should enroll all the world as citizens of a spiritual Jerusalem². The future duty of the nation was to make themselves ready for his advent.

The darker side of the picture,—the elements of decay now at work and the coming degeneracy,—will be given in the Introduction to the succeeding Book.

¹ Is. xliv. 14—17, 'he heweth him down cedars...he burneth part thereof in the fire, he roasteth roast,...he warmeth himself...and with the residue thereof he maketh a god and worshippeth it,' and ib. xl. 19, 20; Jer. x. 3—5.

² § 99. lxxxvii. Introduction.

BOOK IV.

*PSALMS FROM THE PERIOD OF THE
REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM.*

[SECTIONS 90—129.]

§§ 90—98. PILGRIM ODES OF THE RESTORATION.*

§ 90. PSALM CXXIV.

IN the five preceding Pilgrim¹ odes the Psalmist was still in captivity, beset by treacherous² foes, straining his eyes to see the hills of his home³, longing for freedom as the watchman for the dawn⁴. Sorely had his faith been tried by the mockery of the heathen⁵, yet he had at length learnt the lesson of childlike submission⁶. The day dawned at last. The nation had been well nigh swallowed up by the overwhelming number of its oppressors⁷, but it was not destined to be the prey of the monster powers of the Euphrates. The rule of Babylon had been broken by Cyrus, and the captives were freed from the meshes of the net which had so long kept them struggling in its toils⁸

* See p. 221.

³ § 86. cxxi. 1.⁶ § 89. cxxxl.¹ §§ 85—89. Introduction.⁴ § 88. cxxx. 6.⁷ vv. 3, 4, 5.² § 85. cxx.⁵ § 87. cxxiii. 4.⁸ v. 6.

The seemingly accidental circumstance that the nation found a generous liberator in the person of the new conqueror and were thus freed through the help of others and not through any effort of their own made them the more grateful to the Ruler of the destinies of the world¹, the more anxious to preserve communion with Him who had wrought such great deliverance.

A thanksgiving

If Jehovah Himself had not been on our side,	1
(now let Israel say:)	
if Jehovah Himself had not been on our side,	
when men rose up against us;	
they had swallowed us up alive,	2
when they were so wrathfully displeased at us:	
yea, the waters had drowned us,	3
and the stream had gone over our soul,	
yea, the swelling of the waterfloods	4
had gone even over our soul.	

for deliverance from captivity.

But praised be Jehovah,	5
who hath not given us over for a prey unto their teeth;	
our soul is escaped even as a bird out of the snare of the fowler,	6
the snare is broken and we are delivered!	
our help standeth in the name of Jehovah,	7
who hath made heaven and earth.	

Ver. 2. *swallowed*. Cp. § 43. lv. 16; Prov. i. 12. Compare the fate of the company of Korah as described in Num. xvi. 32, 33.

Ver. 3. *waters, i. e. 'enemies.'* The picture of a swollen mountain-torrent, sweeping all before it, is frequently used to describe the sudden and overwhelming attack of enemies. So in Is. viii. 7 it is used of the Assyrian invasion. Cp. also § 142. cxliv. 7; § 12. xviii. 16.

¹ *vv.* 1, 2, 5, 7.

§ 91. PSALM CXXIX.*

THIS Psalm is an outburst of joy at deliverance from captivity: the pictures of past suffering and of the destruction of the oppressor are drawn in the simple imagery of agricultural life.

Israel is invincible, for Jehovah hath broken the arm of the oppressor.

Many a time have they fought against me from my youth up,	1
(may Israel now say)	
many a time have they fought against me from my youth up,	2
but they have not prevailed against me!	
the ploughers ploughed upon my back,	3
and made long furrows:	
but Jehovah is righteous;	4
He hath hewn the harness of the ungodly in sunder!	
let them be confounded and turned backward,	5
as many as have evil will at Sion,	
let them be even as the grass upon the housetops	6
which withereth afore it be grown up:	
whereof the mower filleth not his hand,	7
neither he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom,	
so that they who go by say not so much as,	8
‘Jehovah prosper you,	
‘we wish you good luck in the name of Jehovah.’	

Vv. 3, 6, 7. *ploughers, grass, mowers*; for the frequency of agricultural images, compare the prophet Amos.

Ver. 3. *back*. Cp. Is. l. 6, ‘I gave my back to the smiters.’ Ib. li. 23, ‘They that afflict thee have said to thy soul, ‘Bow down that we may go over;’ and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.’

Ver. 4. *harness*. More exactly, ‘cut the traces.’ As when the cords which bind the oxen to the plough are broken, the plougher can no more furrow the earth, so God has cut off from the tyrants the means of the exercise of their tyranny. Cp. § 90. cxxiv. *Introduction*.

Ver. 6. *grass*, from Is. xxxvii. 27, ‘Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded, they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass of the housetops, and as the corn blasted before it be grown up.’

Ver. 8. *Jehovah prosper you*. Cp. the greeting of Boaz to his reapers, Ruth ii. 4.

* A Pilgrim Ode, see § 90, and p. 221.

§§ 92, 93. PSALMS CXXV, CXXVI.

THESE Psalms date from a time when the new community had indeed been established in Jerusalem by Zerubbabel¹, but the rebuilding of the temple was at a standstill from the heavy pressure of the Samaritans who were supported by Persian nobles². After the first burst of joyous enthusiasm with which the captives had again set foot in Palestine, a reaction had set in. The dread of the constant inroads which destroyed their crops in the fields and menaced their safety in the city, led to internal dissensions and to the formation of a party which advocated submission to the foe. Inspired no doubt by the denunciations of the contemporary Prophets, Zechariah and Haggai³, the Psalmist dispels the terrors of the despairing by his confident assurance of coming victory.

§ 92. PSALM CXXV.

God's care the stay of the oppressed.

They that put their trust in Jehovah 1
 shall be even as the mount Sion which may not be removed,
 but standeth fast for ever :
 the hills stand about Jerusalem, 2
 even so standeth Jehovah round about His people
 from this time forth for evermore :

Ver. 2. *stand about*. Though to the traveller who faces Jerusalem the towers seem to stand out against the sky and to be higher than the hills in the immediate neighbourhood, yet to the worshipper in the Temple, the Mount of Olives, which considerably overtops even the highest part of Mount Sion, might from the fact of its outlying portions bending round towards the city, naturally give the effect of *standing round about Jerusalem*. Like Rome the Holy City had its nearer and more remote barriers of protecting hills; as Rome had its Janiculum hard by and its Apennine and Alban mountains in the distance, so Jerusalem had its Olivet hard by, and on the outposts of its plain, Mizpeh, Gibeon and Ramah and the ridge which divides it from Bethlehem. These hills act as a shelter and must be surmounted before the traveller can see, or the invader attack, the Holy City; and the distant line of Moab

¹ Ps. cxxv. 1, 2.

² Ez. iv. 5.

³ Ez. v. 1.

for the sceptre of the ungodly shall not rest upon the lot of 3
the righteous,
lest the righteous put their hand unto wickedness!
Do well, O Jehovah, unto those that are good, 4
and unto them that are true of heart!
but as for such as turn aside unto their own wickedness, 5
may Jehovah drive them forth with the evil doers,
but peace be upon Israel!

would always seem to rise as a wall against invaders from the remote East. (From Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, 3rd Edit. pp. 174, 175.)

so standeth Jehovah round about His people. Cp. Zech. ii. 4, 5. 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, for I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about.'

Ver. 3. *rest upon, i. e.* the heathen shall not always lay his hand so heavily upon the promised land (the *lot* of the true Israelite), lest the people be tempted by prolonged adversity to leave the true religion.

Ver. 5. *such as turn aside, i. e.* let those who are Israelites by birth, but renegades at heart, be swept away with the evildoers, *i. e.* the heathen foe to whose camp they really belong.

§ 93. PSALM CXXVI.*

A CONTRAST between the many dangers of the present and the unclouded joy of the first years after the return from captivity. By a beautiful figure the repeopling of the land is compared to the grateful return of the water to the streams of southern Judah after the summer drought.

The freed captives remembering the joy of the first return

When Jehovah turned again the captivity of Sion, 1
then were we like unto them that dream;

Ver. 1. *captivity, i. e.* captives. Cp. Jer. xxx. 17—19. 'Because they called thee an outcast, saying, 'This is Sion, whom no man seeketh after:' thus saith Jehovah; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwellingplaces; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner

* Cp. §§ 92, 93, *Introd.*, and p. 221.

then was our mouth filled with laughter, 2
 and our tongue with joy;
 then said they among the heathen: 3
 'Jehovah hath done great things for them!'
 yea, Jehovah hath done great things for us: 4
 then were we full of joy.

pray for help in their difficulty.

Turn our captivity, O Jehovah, 5
 as the rivers in the south;
 they that sow in tears, 6
 shall reap in joy;
 he that now goeth on his way weeping and beareth forth the seed 7
 shall doubtless come again with joy,
 and bring his sheaves with him.

thereof; and out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry.' *dream, i. e.* we could not believe our senses for joy; we seemed to be dreaming.

Vv. 1, 2, 3, 4. *then—then—then—then, i. e.* at the time of the return, which is contrasted with their present time of danger.

Ver. 5. *rivers in the south*, so Job compares his false friends to the 'stream of brooks, which when it is hot are consumed out of their place...they go to nothing and perish' (Job vi. 15, 17, 18).

Ver. 6. *sow in tears*. Sion though now built in tears shall have a glorious future. The new colonists seem to have experienced the literal meaning of the words in the alternations of drought and plenty; cp. the words of the contemporary prophet Haggai (i. 10, 11; ii. 19), as also § 113. lxvii. 6; § 126. lxxxv. 12.

Ver. 7. *he that now...sheaves with him*, more exactly,
 going he shall go and weep, bearing a load of seed;
 coming he shall come and sing, bearing his sheaves with him.

§§ 94, 95. PSALMS CXXVII, CXXVIII.*

THE REPEOPLING OF JERUSALEM.

§ 94. PSALM CXXVII.

THE commencement of this exquisite Psalm is an echo of the words in which Haggai¹ rebuked the people for rebuilding their own homes before they restored the Temple of the Lord. The Psalmist, addressing those who had recently experienced a great deliverance², reminds them that if they would only shew their trust in God by working at His House, He would bless them unawares in the re-establishment of their homes. At a time when 'the people of the land weakened the hands of the men of Judah, and troubled them in building³,' their immediate need was of men to defend the walls, and their thoughts turned not unnaturally to the repeopling of the deserted city, the hope of which is the main idea in this and the following Psalm.

The virtue of God's blessing.

Except Jehovah build the house,	1
their labour is but lost that build it;	
except Jehovah keep the city,	2
the watchman watcheth but in vain:	
it is but lost labour that ye haste to rise up early,	3
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of carefulness;	
He blesseth His beloved while they sleep.	

He sendeth to us children, the strength of the city.

Lo, children are an heritage of Jehovah,	4
and the fruit of the womb is His reward;	

Ver. 3. *blesseth*, i. e. by watching over them Himself. The things which are to others the fruits of anxious toil come to those who cast their care on God as things in a dream, without forethought or expectation on their part. Cp. Prov. x 22: 'The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.'

* See p. 221.

¹ i. 2—3.

² vv. 1, 2, and § 90.

³ Ezra iv. 4.

like as arrows in the hand of a mighty man, 5
 even so are the sons of our youth;
 happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them, 6
 they shall not be ashamed
 when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

Ver. 5. *arrows—quiver*, an image especially appropriate when the immediate need was of men to defend the walls (Ezra iv. 4): so *arrows* are called in Lam. iii. 13 ‘the sons of the quiver.’ *the sons of our youth*, i. e. those that would soon be grown up in time to protect the city walls.

Ver. 6. *gate*. Cp. Gen. xxii. 17: ‘thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,’ and xxiv. 60: ‘be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.’

§ 95. PSALM CXXVIII.*

The blessings of a numerous family

Blessed are all they that fear Jehovah, 1
 and walk in His ways!
 for thou shalt eat the labours of thine hands, 2
 O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.
 Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine, 3
 within the chambers of thine house;
 thy children as the olive-branches 4
 round about thy table:
 lo, thus shall the man be blessed 5
 that feareth Jehovah.

in a beleaguered nation.

Jehovah from out of Sion shall so bless thee, 6
 that ‘thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity
 all thy life long.
 Yea, that thou shalt see thy children’s children. 7
 Peace be upon Israel.

Ver. 2. *shall eat the labour of thine hands*, perhaps a reference to the inroads of Samaritan foes, who often carried away the harvest, the hard-earned fruits of toil.

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

§ 96. PSALM CXXXIII.*

THE two preceding Psalms expressed the joyous feeling with which the Israelites, when restored to their fatherland, began to look upon their offspring, as born not to exile or to slavery but to be a source of strength to the Lord's people against their foes and to be themselves inheritors of the blessings promised to Jerusalem. Here the Poet passes in thought from the blessing of a united family to that of a united nation; unity was impossible except through the national religion; the northern tribes are implored on their return to forget their religious jealousies and not to repeat the fatal policy of disunion, so selfishly initiated by Jeroboam; their only safety lay in recognizing one centre of national worship, for which the hill of Sion was marked out as well by the promise of future blessing as by the pre-eminent sanctity¹ of its past history.

The blessing of national unity.

Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is 1
 for brethren to dwell together!
 it is like the precious ointment upon the head, 2
 that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron's beard,
 and went down to the skirts of his clothing:
 like as the dew of Hermon which falleth upon the hill of Sion, 3
 for there Jehovah promised His blessing. 4
 even life for evermore.

Ver. 1. *dwell together*, *i. e.* be gathered together again from their dispersion in captivity. Cp. Jer. xxxi. 10: 'Hear the word of Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, 'He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him as a shepherd does his flock.' The blessings of unity are compared (1) to the all-pervading fragrance of holy oil, and (2) to the moisture that is borne from the snow-capped Hermon and falls in refreshing drops on the dry southern hills of Judah. The thought of the High Priest suggests the idea of the Temple, and this naturally passes into the thought of the Holy Hill: while the earthly dew of Hermon passes into the heavenly blessing of Sion. The verse shews the mutual dependence of North and South.

Ver. 2. *ointment*, cp. Ex. xxix. 7.

Ver. 4. *there*, *i. e.* to Sion. *life for evermore*. Contrast the blessing here promised with the threat contained in Jer. xxxi. 36: 'If those ordinances depart from before me, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.'

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

¹ Cp. § 36. xlviii. 2 and § 114. lxxviii. 18.

§ 97. PSALM CXXXIV.*

A TEMPLE hymn, in which the Psalmist exhorts the priests and Levites to the earnest performance of their duties, that thus God's favour may be secured for the nation. That efforts were made towards a re-establishment of something like the old Temple-worship, even before the new Temple was built, appears from accounts of Jeshua and Zerubbabel in the book of Ezra¹.

The Psalmist addresseth the Priests.

Behold now, praise ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah,	1
ye that by night stand in the house of Jehovah;	2
lift up your hands to the sanctuary,	3
and praise Jehovah.	

The answer of the Priests.

Jehovah that made heaven and earth	4
shall give thee blessing out of Sion.	

Ver. 2. *by night*, the priests lodged round about the House of God, and some were employed day and night. Cp. 1 Chron. ix. 27, 34. The lamps were kept burning all night, Ex. xxvii. 20, 21.

Ver. 3. *to the sanctuary*, or rather to the mercy-seat. Cp. § 56. xxviii. 2.

Ver. 4. *thee*, *i. e.* the Psalmist himself, for he represents the priests as pronouncing a blessing on the congregation in answer to their previous appeal in vv. 1—3.

§ 98. PSALM CXXXII.*

THIS Psalm should rather be called a blessing on a party of pilgrims than a pilgrim-hymn. It seems to be the utterance of an aged exile, himself unequal to a journey across the desert². The departure of his friends reminds him of the alacrity with which he too had once obeyed a similar summons³; his spirit is fired by sympathy with their enthusiasm and he pours forth the praises of that city, which from the earliest times had been recognized as the keystone of the national unity, the civil and religious metropolis of the tribes⁴.

* A Pilgrim Ode, see p. 221.

¹ Ezra iii. 6, 8, 9.

² v. 8.

³ vv. 1, 2.

⁴ vv. 3, 4, 5.

The exile

I was glad when they said unto me; 1
 'we will go to the House of Jehovah!'

in remembrance of a former pilgrimage

Our feet did stand 2
 in thy gates, O Jerusalem,—
 Jerusalem, that art built 3
 as a city that is compact in itself;
 thither the tribes went up, even the tribes of Jehovah, 4
 according to an ordinance for Israel, to praise the Name of
 Jehovah :
 for there was the seat of judgment, 5
 even the seat of the house of David!

biddeth 'God speed' to his nation.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; 6
 prosperous be thy pavilions!
 peace be within thy walls, 7
 and plenteousness within thy palaces!

Ver. 3. *compact*. 'The deep ravines which separate Jerusalem from the rocky plateau of which it forms a part are a rare feature in the scenery of the Holy Land. Something of the same effect is produced by the vast rents surrounding Granada on the table lands which crown the summits of the Spanish mountains. But in Palestine Jerusalem alone is so entrenched and from this cause derives in great measure her early strength (2 Sam. v. 6, Josh. xv. 63), and subsequent greatness...The deep depressions which thus secured the city, must, like the Jordan valley to the whole country, have always acted as its natural defence, but they also determined its natural boundaries. The city, wherever else it spread, could never overleap the valley of the Kedron or of Hinnom...The expression of *compactness* was still more appropriate to the original city if, as seems probable, the valley of Tyropœon formed in earlier times a fosse within a fosse, shutting in Sion and Moriah into one compact mass not more than half a mile in breadth.' (Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, 3rd edition, pp. 172, 173.)

Ver. 4. *went up*. In allusion to the law requiring all males to attend the three great feasts. Ex. xxiii. 17, xxxiv. 23; Deut. xvi. 16.

Ver. 5. *house of David*, an allusion especially appropriate at a time when Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, was the Tirshatha at Jerusalem. Cp. Ezra ii. 1, 63.

Vv. 6, 7. *peace—prosperous, peace—plenteousness*, the alliteration in these verses represents the play on the meaning of Jerusalem as a 'peaceful possession.'

for my brethren and companions' sake

8

I will wish thee prosperity ;

yea, because of the House of Jehovah our God

9

I will seek to do thee good.

Ver. 9. *seek to do thee good, i. e. win a blessing for thee by my prayers.*

§ 99. PSALM LXXXVII.

THIS Psalm breathes the hopes of the time when Jehovah promised to 'return unto Sion and to dwell again in the midst of Jerusalem¹,' when, amid the inspiring sounds of the trumpets and cymbals² and the joyous shouts of the people, the foundation-stone of the new Temple was being laid, when Zerubbabel the son of Salathiel, the signet of Jehovah³, the anointed descendant of the David who had won for Israel their first settlement on Mount Sion, was again installed there as the prince of the house of Judah, and was allowed the honour denied to David himself, of being the builder of the house of Jehovah.

The joy of the time was enhanced by the unexpected nature of the deliverance. Little could they have hoped for such an hour during the long years of a seemingly endless exile, when their race seemed like a drop lost in the vast sea of nations which formed the Babylonian Empire. The sudden turn in the world's history, which had restored them to their land and made them the favoured subjects of one whom they recognized as Jehovah's Anointed⁴ upon earth, may well have kindled high hopes in the soul of the prophets who with Zechariah 'bade their hands be strong in the great day of the foundation of the house of the Lord of Hosts⁵.'

The prophetic descriptions of the glory of Mount Sion lead the Psalmist to pour forth his feelings in song, as his heart is enlarged to realize the grand idea of the whole world as one fold under one Shepherd, servants of Him whose kingdom was again established on Mount Sion. Rising above the exclusiveness which marred the greatness of the Israelite, he would extend the rights of Abraham's children

¹ Zech. viii. 3.

² Ezra iii. 10.

³ Hag. ii. 23.

⁴ Is. xlv. 28; xlv. 1.

⁵ Zech. viii. 9.

to all; for have not all, who are in heart the true servants of Jehovah, been born again as citizens of Jerusalem? In the expressive words of the contemporary prophet, 'many and strong nations would come to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem and to pray before the Lord; men of all languages of the world would take hold of the skirt of him that was a Jew, saying, 'we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you!''

The Psalmist repeateth the promises of the prophets that Jerusalem shall be the metropolis of the world and all mankind shall be counted as her citizens.

[Jehovah loveth Zion,]

1

His foundations are upon the 'holy hills;
Jehovah loveth the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob:
glorious things are spoken of thee,
thou city of God:

2

I will say of Rahab and Babylon, as of them that know Me, 3
lo, of the Philistine also and of Tyre with the Ethiopian, 4
'this man was born in her!'

Ver. 1. The first verse stands simply 'His founded (city) upon the holy hills,' cp. Is. xiv. 32. The abruptness of the opening requires us to supply in words or in thought the commencement of the next verse.

Ver. 2. *are spoken of thee, i.e.* by the prophets, and especially by Isaiah, cp. ii. 2-4, 'The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established...and all nations shall flow unto it.' xi. 10, 'There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek:' so with special reference to Ethiopia (xviii), Egypt (xix), Philistia (xx), Tyre (xxiii), cp. especially xix. 21-25, 'The Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord and perform it... Blessed be Egypt My people and Assyria the work of My hands and Israel Mine inheritance.' The promises in some passages seem to be limited to 'the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah,' in others to be more general. Cp. note on Messianic Expectations, § 63.

Ver. 3. *Rahab*, literally 'the proud one,' *i.e.* Egypt; a poetical name especially used where there is an allusion to Israel's escape out of the clutches of Egypt, cp. Job xxvi. 12, 'He divideth the sea with His power, and smiteth through Rahab' (A. V. 'the proud'), Ib. ix. 13, 'the helpers of Rahab' (A. V. 'the proud helpers') do stoop under Him.' Cp. also Is. li. 9, § 124. xxxix. 10.

Ver. 4. *this man, i.e.* each individual of all this innumerable multitude of nations shall have the rights of Jewish descent and be counted for sons of Abraham born in Jerusalem. Cp. note on ver. 2, and vv. 5, 6.

and of Sion it shall be said :

‘this man and that man was born in her,

‘and the most High Himself shall stablish her!’

Jehovah shall count when He writeth up the people :

‘this man was born in her!’—

singers also and dancers,

yea, all ~~My~~ fresh springs are in thee!

Ver. 6. *Jehovah shall count* their names when He maketh the lists of citizens in His city, cp. Ezek. xiii. 9. ‘they shall not be in the assembly of My people, neither shall they be written in the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel.’ For the custom of keeping rolls of citizens cp. Ezra ii. 59, Neh. vii. 5.

Ver. 7. *singers also and dancers.* A picture of the future glories of Sion, when the *singers and dancers* of the world should no longer prostitute their talents to the services of profane or lascivious worship but raise their united voice to Jehovah in His Temple. The change from the description of the actual services to the idea of the potential greatness of Sion is abrupt. The brevity of expression is so great that the meaning is necessarily obscure. Another rendering, with a slight alteration of the Hebrew punctuation, is ; ‘They both dance and sing, all that dwell in thee.’ *fresh springs, i. e.* the sources of all joys. So of the comprehensive spirit of Christianity it has been well said : ‘And as when some splendid edifice is to be reared, its diversified materials are brought from this quarter and from that, according as nature and man favour their production, so did the wisdom of God, with slow but ever sure device, cause to ripen amidst the several races best adapted to the work the several component parts of the noble fabric of a Christian manhood and a Christian constitution. ‘The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall give presents; the kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts.’ Every worker was, with or without his knowledge and his will, to contribute to the work. And among them an appropriate part was thus assigned both to the Greek people and to what I have called the Olympian religion.’ (Gladstone, *Juventus Mundi.*)

§ 100. PSALM CXXXVII.

DURING the captivity the Jews had shrunk from exposing their faith to the mockery of the heathen. The great hymns setting forth their claims to be the chosen people and their confidence in the destinies of their nation would have provoked the cry, ‘where is now your God?’ But the belief in the future of the nation and the protection of Jehovah never died. Nowhere is so clearly exhibited as in this Psalm the undying love to the city of Jehovah which the nobler spirits had cherished during the exile, and which the prophets strove to infuse into the uninspired mass of their brethren amidst the difficulties of their return. Fasts were instituted during the captivity to

commemorate the month of the fall of Jerusalem, and it became a question on their return, whether they should still sit down and weep in the 5th month, separating themselves as they had done during these many years¹ of the captivity.

To this, as to all local attachments, there were two sides. The nobler side found expression in the comprehensive feelings of the preceding Psalm², the narrower side was capable of peculiar bitterness. The feeling which excited the animosity of the Samaritans when our Lord 'set his face as though he would go to Jerusalem,' and against which one of the most impressive of the parables is directed, here vents itself upon the Edomites³, who had joined the invading host of Nebuchadnezzar in that fatal 'day of Jerusalem,' and had received a portion of the land as a reward for their share in the destruction of the kingdom. The perfidy of their ancient vassals may well have aroused especial indignation in the heart of the Psalmist at a time when the Israelites cherished hopes of restoring the kingdom to its ancient limits.

I. *The Psalmist recalleth the sorrows of exile,*

By the waters of Babylon we sat down, and wept	1
when we remembered thee, O Sion ;	
as for our harps we hanged them up	2
upon the trees that are therein :	
for they that led us away captive required of us then a song,	3
and they that wasted us melody in our heaviness :	
'sing us one of the songs of Sion.'	

II. *and the love of their native city ;*

How should we sing the song of Jehovah	4
in a strange land !—	
if I forget thee, O Jerusalem,	5
let my right hand forget her cunning ;	

Ver. 5. *right hand.* Cp. 1 Kings xiii. 4, § 37. lxxvi. 5. *cunning, i. e.* musical skill. Cp. Glossary.

¹ Cp. Zech. vii. 3, with 2 Kings xxv. 8.

³ Cp. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, ii. pp. 556, 7.

² § 99. lxxxvii.

if I do not remember thee 6
 let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth ;
 yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem to my joy !

III. *he calleth for a curse on the Chaldeans and their allies.*

O Jehovah, remember the children of Edom, in the day of 7
 Jerusalem
 how they said : 'down with it, down with it,
 'even to the ground !'
 O daughter of Babylon, that wastest with misery ! 8
 happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us ;
 yea, blessed shall he be that taketh thy children 9
 and throweth them against the stones !

Ver. 6. *to my joy.* So A. V. 'prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy.'

Ver. 7. *remember (against) the children of Edom the day of Jerusalem, i.e. requite them for their share in its destruction.*

Ver. 8. *daughter of Babylon.* The word *daughter* is used of cities in general, which are thus personified. Cp. Is. x. 32, 'He shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Sion, the hill of Jerusalem.' *wastest with misery*, ambiguous ; either 'layest waste,' thus giving the justification of the following prayer for vengeance ; or 'wasting away,' i. e. doomed to destruction ; Babylon had been already conquered.

Ver. 9. *throweth them against the stones*, cp. Hos. x. 14 (of Israel), 'all thy fulness shall be destroyed, as Shalman spoiled Betharbel in the day of battle : the mother was dashed to pieces upon her children.'

§§ 101—104. PSALMS CXVIII, CXV, CXVI, CXXXVIII.

THESE four Psalms have a great resemblance to one another both in feeling and in expression. All contain the same joyful gratitude for a recent deliverance from the persecution of heathen nations. All have the same deep sense that only by the continuance of divine aid can the fruits of victory be secured. Such feelings would in an eminent degree be called forth by the restoration under Zerubbabel, and it is not impossible that these Psalms are from his pen.

§ 101. PSALM CXVIII.

THIS Psalm was obviously designed for the celebration of a great national festival. All the Psalms of this period have the triumphant tone of a nation just escaped from the thralldom of foreign oppres-

sors¹. We can imagine the Israelites in the joy of restoration to their country singing such a Psalm as this at one of the great celebrations of the feast of Tabernacles, either when Zerubbabel² laid the foundations of the second Temple, or when Nehemiah³ brought the long work to a successful conclusion. If such be the case, the allusion to 'the tents of the righteous' from which 'the voice of joy and triumph' issues would have a peculiar propriety.

I.

A triumphal procession approacheth the Holy Place with sacrifice and thanksgiving

[Choir.]

O give thanks unto Jehovah, for He is gracious, 1

His mercy endureth for ever:

therefore let Israel confess, 2

His mercy endureth for ever:

therefore let the house of Aaron confess, 3

His mercy endureth for ever:

therefore let all that fear Jehovah confess, 4

His mercy endureth for ever.

for deliverance from the heathen,

[Leader of Choir.]

I called upon Jehovah in trouble: 5

and Jehovah heard me and set me at large:

Jehovah is on my side, I will not fear; 6

what can man do unto me?

Jehovah taketh my part with them that help me, 7

therefore shall I see my desire upon mine enemies!

Ver. 1. *O give—for ever*, from Jer. xxxiii. 11, 'Praise the Lord of Hosts: for the Lord is good: and His mercy endureth for ever.' From § 146. cxxxvi. 1, 'O give thanks unto Jehovah: for He is gracious, and His mercy endureth for ever,' and from § 133. cvi. 1, we see that the form of praise in the first verse was a customary formula in the Temple services. Here it is to be thrice uttered by the Israelites and repeated by the proselytes, here called *those who fear Jehovah*, as in § 69. xxii. 23, where 'they that fear Jehovah' are distinguished from 'the seed of Israel and Jacob.' So in Acts xiii. 16, 'men of Israel and ye that fear God.'

¹ *vv.* 10—18.

² Ezra iii. 4.

³ Neh. viii. 14.

It is better to trust in Jehovah,
 than to put any confidence in man ;
 it is better to trust in Jehovah,
 than to put any confidence in princes.

II.

[*Leader and Choir alternately.*]

All nations compassed me round about,
 but in the name of Jehovah will I destroy them,
 they kept me in, they kept me in, I say, on every side,
 but in the name of Jehovah will I destroy them,
 they came about me like bees,
 and are extinct even as a fire of thorns,
 in the name of Jehovah will I destroy them.

[*Leader.*]

Thou hast thrust at me that I might fall,
 but Jehovah was my helper,
 Jehovah is my praise and my song!
 for He is become my salvation !

III. *and restoration to their country.*

Hark ! the voice of joy and triumph
 is in the tents of the righteous :
 the right hand of Jehovah bringeth mighty things to pass !
 the right hand of Jehovah hath the pre-eminence,
 the right hand of Jehovah bringeth mighty things to pass.
 I shall not die but live,
 and declare the works of Jehovah ;
 Jehovah hath chastened me sore,
 but He hath not given me over unto death.

Ver. 9. *princes.* Of the fickleness of princes the Israelites had had full experience in captivity. see Ezra iv. Cp. § 148. cxlvi. 3

Ver. 12. *bees,* cp. Ex. xxiii. 28, 'I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, etc.'

Ver. 18. *Jehovah—death.* Cp. Jer. x. 24, 25.

IV. *The procession reacheth the Holy Place.*

Open unto me the gates of righteousness,	19
that I may go in and praise Jehovah!	
this is the gate of Jehovah,	20
the righteous shall enter into it;	
I will give thanks unto Thee for Thou hast heard me,	21
and art become my salvation!	
the same stone which the builders refused,	22
is become the headstone in the corner:	
this is Jehovah's doing;	23
and it is marvellous in our eyes.	

[*People.*]

This is the day that Jehovah hath made,	24
let us rejoice and be glad in it!	
give us help now, O Jehovah,	25
O Jehovah, send us now prosperity!	

[*The high priest*]*blesseth the procession and the offering.*

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah!	26
we wish you good luck from the house of Jehovah!	
Jehovah is God: and HE hath shewed us light;	27
bind the sacrifice with cords,	
yea, even unto the horns of the altar!	

Ver. 19. *gates of righteousness, i.e.* the gates of the Temple open only to the righteous. Cp. § 5. xv. 1, 2 and Is. xxvi. 2, 'Open ye the gates that the righteous nation... may enter it,' *i.e.* the strong city of Judah.

Ver. 22. *stone which the builders refused.* The meaning is that the despised nation of Israel whom the proud 'builders of Babel' had discarded and would have destroyed, is really the first stone and foundation of the kingdom of God. Cp. Is. xxviii. 16. 'Therefore thus saith the Lord God, 'Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation,' while in Jer. li. 26 it is said of Babylon striving for universal dominion, 'they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for a foundation.' For the expression cp. Job xxxviii. 6: for the thought contained in the verse, see Zech. iv. 6—10.

Ver. 24. *day, i.e.* a feast day celebrated in accordance with ancient custom.

[*Leader of Choir.*]

Thou art my God, and I will thank Thee, 28
 Thou art my God, and I will praise Thee!

[*Choir.*]

Give thanks unto Jehovah for He is gracious, 29
 and His mercy endureth for ever.

§ 102. PSALM CXV.

A CONGREGATIONAL Psalm sung during the trials and hostilities to which the new community under Zerubbabel was exposed. 'The taunts of their heathen adversaries were still ringing in their ears, contempt for Babylonish idolatries was still fresh in their hearts¹.' The main thought of the prayer however is not so much of deliverance from danger, as for the maintenance of the true religion. All confidence and claim upon divine protection is founded on the faithful adherence of the nation to Jehovah and the recognition of its duties to Him. This Psalm contains the great lesson² of the captivity. The Jews had been hitherto prone to idolatry; now after their return they treat it with scorn.

[*People.*]I. *The invisible God of Israel contrasted*

Not unto us, O Jehovah, not unto us, 1
 but unto Thy name give the praise:
 for Thy loving mercy and for Thy truth's sake!
 wherefore should the heathen say; 2
 'where is now their God?'
 as for our God—He is in Heaven, 3
 He doeth whatsoever pleaseth Him.

Ver. 1. *mercy—truth*, mercy in delivering us from the heathen, cp. ver. 2; *truth* in keeping the promises made to our forefathers; cp. Glossary.

¹ Perowne, *Psalms*, ii. p. 277.² Cp. general Introduction to Book IV. p. 231.

II. *with the gods of the heathen.*

As for their idols—they are silver and gold,	4
the work of men's hands:	
they have mouths and speak not,	5
eyes have they and see not:	
they have ears and hear not,	6
noses have they and smell not!	
they have hands and handle not;	7
feet have they and walk not,	
neither speak they through their throat.	

III. *The future of the Israelites dependent on the recognition of their duty to this God.*

Let them that make them be like unto them,	8
and so be all they that put their trust in them!	
but thou, O Israel, trust thou in Jehovah!	9
<i>He is their succour and defence;</i>	
ye house of Aaron, put your trust in Jehovah!	10
<i>He is their succour and defence.</i>	
ye that fear Jehovah, put your trust in Jehovah!	11
<i>He is their succour and defence.</i>	

[*High priest.*]

Jehovah hath been mindful of us, and He shall bless us,	12
He shall bless the house of Israel,	
He shall bless the house of Aaron,	
He shall bless them that fear Jehovah,	13
both small and great:	
Jehovah shall increase you more and more,	14
you and your children:	
blessed be ye of Jehovah,	15
who made heaven and earth!	

Vv. 16—18. *the earth hath He given to the children of men that they may praise Him thereupon: so will we for evermore.*

[*People.*]

The heavens are the heaven for Jehovah, 16
 but the earth hath He given to the children of men;
 the dead praise not Jehovah, 17
 neither all they that go down into silence;
 but we will praise Jehovah, 18
 from this time forth for evermore!

Ver. 17. *dead—silence*, cp. § 26. vi. 5, § 28. xxx. 10, and Is. xxxviii. 18.

§ 103. PSALM CXVI.

THE joy and gratitude called forth by the restoration of the national independence¹ found utterance not only in Psalms composed for the public services of the Temple, but also in outbursts of private devotion. The tone of this Psalm is that of trouble; but the power of faith in Jehovah enables the Psalmist to realize the future as already present, and thus a prayer for help passes into a song of joy and thanksgiving.

Many words and expressions from the earlier Psalms and especially the Psalms of David are called to mind by the language used here². It is but one of many proofs, how deep the words of David had sunk into the heart of the nation, and how they had been a comfort and support to the Israelites in times of sorrow and suffering.

The abrupt transition in the 10th verse may be accounted for by the loss of a few lines: but the breach of continuity is not sufficient to justify the division into two Psalms, which appears in the Septuagint.

I. *The Psalmist, calling upon Jehovah,*

I am well pleased that Jehovah hath heard 1
 the voice of my prayer:
 that He hath inclined His ear unto me, 2
 therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live;

¹ v. 14.

² Perowne, *Psalms*.

when the snares of death compass me round about,	3
and the pains of hell get hold upon me,	
when I find trouble and heaviness,	4
then do I call upon the name of Jehovah,	
‘O Jehovah, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul!’	
‘gracious is Jehovah and righteous,	5
‘yea, our God is merciful:	
‘Jehovah preserveth the simple,	6
‘I was in misery and He helped me!’	
<i>who delivered him aforetime,</i>	
Turn thee again then to thy rest, O my soul,	7
for Jehovah hath dealt bountifully with thee!	
for why? Thou hast delivered my soul from death,	8
mine eyes from tears,	
and my feet from falling.	
I will walk before God	9
in the land of the living.	
I believe in Him when I say	10
‘I was sore troubled.’	

II. *receiveth His blessings with gratitude*

Verily I said in my trouble,	
‘all men are liars.’	
What shall I render unto Jehovah,	11
for all the benefits which He hath done unto me?	
I will receive the cup of salvation,	12
and call upon the name of Jehovah,	

Ver. 3 is derived from § 12. xviii. 4.

Vv. 7, 8, 9 are derived from § 51. lvi. 13.

Ver. 10. *when I say.* The meaning is this, The afflictions I have endured have taught me the lesson of confidence in God and the folly of trusting to man. When I exclaim, ‘I have been sore troubled but am already delivered’ my faith revives; the remembrance of deliverance from past dangers makes me believe in deliverance from my present trouble. *I was.* The tense is emphatic; his troubles are a thing of the past.

Ver. 12. The *cup* is a frequent metaphor for the portion allotted to man (1) of blessing as in § 63. xvi. 6, § 25. xxiii. 5, (2) of adversity as in § 1. xi. 7, § 38. lxxv. 9. Here by a figure Jehovah is represented as a host offering a cup of blessing to His guest. The meaning is ‘my best thank-offering to God is cheerfully to accept the blessings which He bestows.’

I will pay my vows unto Jehovah, 13
 yea, now in the presence of all His people!
 right dear in the sight of Jehovah
 is the death of His saints.

and will yet praise Him in the restored Temple at Jerusalem.

Behold, Jehovah, how that I am Thy servant, 14
 I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid:
 Thou hast broken my bonds in sunder!
 I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, 15
 and will call upon the name of Jehovah;
 I will pay my vows unto Jehovah 16
 in the sight of all His people—
 in the courts of the House of Jehovah,
 even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem.

Ver. 13. *dear is the death of His saints, i.e.* my deliverance from the jaws of death is a proof of the value God sets upon the lives of His saints. Cp. § 63. lxxii. 14.

Ver. 14. *broken—bonds, i.e.* freed me from captivity.

§ 104. PSALM CXXXVIII.

THIS Psalm is distinguished by the thought which characterised the times of Zerubbabel. Once the hopes of the Jews aimed at the annihilation and subjection of the heathen, 'the Lord,' they then hoped, 'would be at their right hand to smite in sunder kings in the day of His¹ wrath.' Now the prayer of the nation is that 'all the kings of the earth may praise² Him.' With the growth of that increased tenderness, which came from the chastening of adversity, arises the new hope that the whole world may be converted to the worship of Jehovah. This great idea first arose after the overthrow of the Assyrians, and manifests itself in all the writings of this time. It is well exemplified in the prophecy of Zechariah³. 'In those days it shall

¹ § 10, cx. 5.

v. 4.

³ Zech. viii. 23; cp. viii. 20; ix. 7.

come to pass that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, 'We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you¹.'

I. *The Psalmist praises God for His truth.*

I will give thanks unto Thee with my whole heart, 1
 even before God do I sing praise unto Thee;
 I will worship at Thy holy Temple and praise Thy name, 2
 because of Thy lovingkindness and truth,
 for Thou hast magnified Thy word and Thy name above all things,
 when I called upon Thee, Thou heardest me, 3
 and enduedst my soul with much strength

II. *The princes of the heathen shall be converted to Him,*

Let all the kings of the earth praise Thee, O Jehovah, 4
 for they have heard the words of Thy mouth!
 yea, let them sing of the ways of Jehovah, 5
 that great is the glory of Jehovah!
 for though Jehovah be high, yet hath He respect unto the lowly,
 as for the proud, He beholdeth them afar off. 6

III. *and He shall complete His work.*

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, yet shalt Thou refresh me,
 Thou shalt stretch forth Thine hand against the furious- 7
 ness of mine enemies,
 and Thy right hand shall save me!

Ver. 1. *before God*, i.e. before the mercy seat, in the Holy Place, the Temple. Cp. 2 Kings xiii. 23.

Ver. 2. *word*, i.e. fulfilment of promise. *above all things*, i.e. above all that we have heard of Thee hast Thou fulfilled Thy promise. *God's Name* here as elsewhere means not only His titles, but all that is known of Him by revelation and tradition.

Ver. 6. *lowly*. Cp. Is. lvii. 15, 'Thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity; 'I dwell in the High and Holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.'

Jehovah shall make good His lovingkindness towards me, 8
 yea, Jehovah, Thy mercy endureth for ever!
 despise not Thou the work of Thine own hands!

Ver. 8. *despise*—*work*, *i. e.* complete the good work of deliverance, which Thou in Thy lovingkindness hast begun.

§§ 105—112. PSALMS XCII, XCIII, XCV—C.

THESE are all liturgical Psalms and to be assigned to the period of the revival of the Temple service after the return from captivity. They are similar in their tone and in the intensity of their joy, and are all probably due to the same author¹.

§ 105. PSALM XCII.

I. *The delight of praising the Lord,*

It is a good thing to give thanks to Jehovah, 1
 and to sing praises unto Thy name, O most Highest!
 to tell of Thy lovingkindness early in the morning, 2
 and of Thy truth in the night season;
 upon an instrument of ten strings and upon the lute, 3
 upon a loud instrument and upon the harp.

II. *for He upholdeth the true in heart,*

For Thou, O Jehovah, hast made me glad through Thy works, 4
 and I will rejoice in giving thanks for the operation of Thy
 hands;
 O Jehovah, how glorious are Thy works! 5
 Thy thoughts are very deep!
 an unwise man doth not well consider this, 6
 and a fool doth not understand it.

¹ Cp. xcii. 9; xciv. 1, 3; xcvi. 13, for form of structure; also xciii. 1 with xcvi. 10; and xcv. 3; xcvi. 4; xcvi. 9.

When the ungodly were green as the grass, 7
 and all the workers of wickedness did flourish,—
 it was that they might be destroyed for ever,
 but Thou, Jehovah, art the most Highest for evermore!

III. *and will bestow His blessing on those who visit His sanctuary.*

For lo! Thine enemies, O Jehovah, 8
 for lo! Thine enemies perish :
 and all the workers of wickedness are scattered abroad ;
 and Thou hast exalted my horn as the horn of a buffalo, 9
 I am anointed with fresh oil ;
 mine eye also hath seen his lust upon mine enemies, 10
 and mine ear hath heard his desire of the wicked that rise up
 against me ;
 the righteous doth flourish as a palm-tree, 11
 and spreadeth forth like a cedar in Libanus ;
 planted in the house of Jehovah, 12
 and flourishing in the courts of our God,
 they shall bring forth more fruit in their age, 13
 they shall be green and full of sap ;
 that they may shew that Jehovah is true, 14
 He is my rock and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

Ver. 9. *oil*. Cp. § 41. cxli. 6.

Ver. 10. *his* is the old form of 'its.' See Glossary.

§ 106. PSALM XCIII.

IN this and the six following Psalms we have specimens of the triumphant thanksgiving, public and private, called forth by the restoration of the Israelites to their country.

It seemed as though the kingdom of God were now firmly established and the triumph of His religion secured. Therefore could the faithful sing 'a new song¹.'

¹ § 109. xcvi. 1; § 110. xcvi. 1; § 72. xl. 3; § 142. cxliv. 9; § 151. cxlix. 1.

In this Psalm the uprising of Jehovah to rescue His chosen people from the midst of the nations, is depicted in a metaphor scarcely less grand than that of the greatest utterance of David¹.

As in a thunder-storm Jehovah sits enthroned above the water-floods, and when the waves roar around the steps of His throne His voice peals forth in thunder and quells the fury of the sea, so when the nations gather around His people, Jehovah utters His voice and silences the tumults of the oppressors.

I. *God reigneth in heaven,*

Jehovah is king and hath put on glorious apparel, 1
 Jehovah hath put on His apparel and girded Himself with
 strength;
 He hath made the world so sure that it cannot be moved, 2
 Thy throne is established of old, 3
 Thou art from everlasting.

II. *above the raging of the sea,*

The floods have lift up, O Jehovah, 4
 the floods have lift up their voice:
 the floods lift up their waves;
 mighty is the voice of many waters, 5
 yea, mighty is the raging of the sea,
 but Jehovah, who dwelleth on high, is mightier.

III. *and must be worshipped with holy worship.*

Thy testimonies are very sure: 6
 holiness becometh Thine House,
 O Jehovah, for ever!

Ver. 4. *floods.* For a similar metaphor compare Jer. xlv. 7, 8, where the violence of Egypt is represented by a flood.

Ver. 5. *mighty—mightier.* The imagery is from thunder. As the thunder drowns the fury of the waves, so the voice of God silences the tumults of the world. Cp. § 35. xlv. 3.

Ver. 6. *testimonies, i. e.* oracles, commandments. See Glossary. *holiness becometh Thine House, i. e.* only the holy people (Israel) shall enter it, cp. Joel iii. 7, 'Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more.'

¹ § 12. xviii.

§ 107. PSALM xcviI.

THIS Psalm is not a mere thanksgiving for the reestablishment of the kingdom of God in Judæa. It marks an epoch in the history of Israel and the world. The two great lessons of the Captivity had been learned. The Hebrews had seen the folly and wickedness of the idolatrous worship which had once seduced them with an irresistible charm¹. And in the next place their desire for isolation among the nations of the earth had yielded to the softening influence of human intercourse even when that intercourse was with their oppressors². This inclination to extend the blessings of their religion even to the 'isles which were beyond the sea,' and the fervour of faith in the omnipotence of Jehovah which their great deliverance had called forth, fitted the Jews to become the centre of religious life in the world; and this at the very moment when the dawn of the classical era and the rise of the only two nations beside the Jews whose influence is unmistakably felt at the present hour³, were preparing the world by culture to receive that religion which it was the destiny of the Jews to develope, and to usher in the glories of modern civilization by uniting the exalted morality and religious inspiration of the East with the art, law and philosophy of the West.

I. *God who ruleth on high,*

Jehovah is king: let the earth rejoice, 1
 yea, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof!
 clouds and darkness are round about Him, 2
 righteousness and truth are the foundation of His throne:
 there goeth forth a fire before Him 3
 and burneth up His enemies on every side.

Ver. 1. *isles, i.e.* shores. This expression is used (1) for the islands or shores of the Mediterranean (cp. § 63. lxxii. 10), (2) for the 'lands of the heathen' generally, as in the Psalms of this period, and in the contemporary prophet (Is. xl—lxx). In Ezek. xxvii. 15 it is used of the Persian gulf.

Ver. 3. *fire, i.e.* lightning; cp. ver. 4. For the picture see § 12. xviii. 7—13.

¹ *vv.* 7—9.

² *v.* 1.

³ Cp. *Introd.* to Book IV. and Stanley, *Jewish Church*, Part II. p. 578.

II. *sheweth His glory in the storm.*

His lightnings gave shine unto the world, 4
the earth saw it and was afraid :
the hills melted like wax at the presence of Jehovah, 5
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth :
the heavens have declared His righteousness, 6
and all peoples have seen His glory.

III. *The Psalmist quoteth a prophecy which had given assurance to Israel.*

‘Confounded be all they that worship carved images, 7
‘and that delight in vain gods !
‘worship Him, all ye gods !’
Sion heard this and rejoiced, and the daughters of Judah were glad, 8
because of Thy judgments, O Jehovah !
for Thou, Jehovah, art higher than all lands, 9
Thou art exalted far above all gods.

IV. *In devotion to God lieth the safety of Israel.*

Ye that love Jehovah, see that ye hate the thing which is evil ! 10
He preserveth the souls of His saints ; He shall deliver
them from the hand of the ungodly :
there is sprung up a light for the righteous ; 11
and gladness for such as are true of heart :
rejoice in Jehovah, O ye righteous, 12
and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

Ver. 8. *judgments, i.e. on the heathen.*

§ 108. PSALM XCIX.

THIS Psalm celebrates the two attributes of God which had been brought most prominently before the Jews by their late deliverance from captivity. The first was that Omnipotence which had broken the power of the East by the hand of Cyrus. The second was that Holiness or Justice which secured the fulfilment of His promises, and which meted out mercy or vengeance with an equal balance according to the deserts of men.

I. *Jehovah, King of kings,*

Jehovah is king: the nations tremble; 1
 He sitteth between the cherubim: the earth doth shake.
 Jehovah is great in Sion, 2
 high is HE above all the peoples!
 praised be His great and glorious name, 3
for He is Holy!

II. *He who loveth justice,*

Praised be the King's power that loveth judgment! 4
 Thou hast established equity;
 Thou hast executed righteousness and truth in Jacob!
 O magnify Jehovah our God, 5
 fall down before His footstool,
for He is Holy!

III. *and revealeth Himself to His servants, is to be worshipped with holy worship.*

Moses and Aaron among His priests, 6
 Samuel among such as call upon His name;
 these called upon Jehovah and He heard them;
 He spake unto them out of the cloudy pillar, 7
 they kept His testimonies,
 and the law that He gave them:
 Thou heardest them, O Jehovah, our God, 8
 Thou wast unto them a God of mercy,—
 but a God of vengeance to their iniquities!

Ver. 1. *cherubim*, cp. § 69. xxii. ver. 3, note. *shake*, i.e. at the Theophany or manifestation of the Divine presence. Cp. § 12. xviii. 7, 8.

Ver. 4. *the King's power*, i.e. God's power which is only used to execute the fiat of His justice.

Ver. 5. *footstool*, cp. Ezek. xciii. 7.

Vv. 6—8. The meaning must be gathered from the 8th verse. God deigns to reveal Himself to His servants; but even they may not transgress with impunity. Thus Moses and Aaron were punished by exclusion from the holy land, and Samuel by the sorrow of his later years, and by the apostasy of his sons (1 Sam. viii. 3). Compare God's revelation of Himself, in Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. *priests*, i.e. mediators, cp. Jer. xv. 1, 'though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people.'

O magnify Jehovah our God, 9
and worship before His holy mountain,
for He is Holy, Jehovah our God.

§§ 109, 110. PSALMS XCVI, XCVIII.

THE two next Psalms are the most general thanksgivings in the Psalter, praising Jehovah as the Deliverer of old, the present Ruler and the future Judge of the whole world.

In common with the prophecies of the same date they are marked by a deeper sympathy alike with mankind and with nature than is to be found in the earlier Hebrew poetry. This was undoubtedly one of the beneficial effects of the afflictions of the Captivity. Intercourse with God had become closer and more personal, and the analysis of human emotion more deep and precise. The Temple and its services had once absorbed much religious devotion; when the beloved ceremonial passed away, and the consolations of ritual were no longer possible, the human spirit entered into closer union with the Divine. The elevating result of this religious change in affecting the feelings of the Jews towards mankind has been often dwelt on already¹: it is scarcely less marked in the poetic representations of nature, and may be compared with the singular influence exerted by pantheistic philosophy on the poetry of modern times.

The poets of this age looked upon nature with a more human feeling. To them Nature becomes instinct with emotion and sympathises with the goodness of the Creator and with the triumphs of the righteous: the very hills break into singing and the trees of the forest clap their hands. Hitherto Jehovah had rejoiced in His works, now His works rejoice in His presence and His dispensations, and look forward with eager expectation to the establishment of His righteous government in the world.

¹ See § 107, Introduction.

§ 109. PSALM XCVI.*

I. *Praise of Jehovah,*

O sing unto the Lord a new song! 1
 sing unto Jehovah all the whole earth!
sing unto Jehovah and praise His name! 2
 be telling of His salvation from day to day!
declare His glory among the heathen, 3
 and His wonders among all people!
for Jehovah is great and glorious, 4
 He is more to be feared than all gods!

as for the gods of the heathen, they are but idols, 5
 but it is Jehovah who made the heavens:
glory and majesty are before Him, 6
 power and honour are in His sanctuary.

II. *for He shall judge the world.*

Ascribe unto Jehovah, O ye kindreds of the peoples, 7
 ascribe unto Jehovah worship and praise!
ascribe unto Jehovah the honour due unto His name, 8
 bring offerings and come into His courts!
O worship Jehovah in holy apparel, 9
 let the whole earth stand in awe of Him!
tell it out among the heathen that Jehovah is king, 10
 and that He hath made the earth so fast that it cannot be
 moved:
and He shall judge the people righteously!

III.

Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad, 11
 let the sea make a noise and all that therein is!

Vv. 5, 6. These verses which break the structure of the Psalm were possibly added from another Psalm on account of their exact coincidence with the line of thought.

* See Introduction, p. 265.

let the field be joyful and all that is in it, 12
 then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
 before Jehovah, for He cometh, 13
 for He cometh to judge the earth;
 and with righteousness to judge the world,
 and the people with His truth!

Ver. 12. *field be joyful—trees of the wood rejoice.* The metaphor ver. 12 is probably derived from Is. lv. 12, 'The mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.'

§ 110. PSALM XCVIII.*

LIKE the other Psalms of this group, this is plainly composed for a congregational service, to celebrate the restoration of Jerusalem by the mighty hand of God. Its close correspondence to the 95th Psalm¹ is especially obvious at the beginning and end.

I. *God hath delivered His people:*

O sing unto Jehovah a new song, for He hath done marvellous 1
 things,
 with His own right hand and His holy arm hath He gotten 2
 Himself the victory!
 Jehovah hath declared His salvation, 3
 His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the
 heathen;
 He hath remembered His mercy and truth toward the house of 4
 Israel,
 and all the ends of the world have seen the salvation of our
 God.

Ver. 3. *salvation, i. e. deliverance from captivity.*

* See Introduction, p. 265.

¹ § 111.

II. *let the world be glad thereat,*

Shew yourselves joyful unto Jehovah, all ye lands! 5
 sing, rejoice and give thanks;
 praise Jehovah upon the harp, 6
 sing to the harp with a psalm of thanksgiving!
 with trumpets also and shawms, 7
 O shew yourselves joyful before Jehovah the king!

III. *for He will found a righteous government upon the earth.*

Let the sea make a noise and all that therein is, 8
 the world and they that dwell therein!
 let the floods clap their hands, 9
 and let the hills be joyful together
 before Jehovah, for He cometh to judge the earth; 10
 with righteousness shall He judge the world,
 and the peoples with equity.

Ver. 7. *shawm*, a reed-pipe. See Glossary.

§ 111. PSALM XCV.

THIS is called the Invitatory Psalm. As it summoned the Jews of old to 'fall down and worship' in their Temple at Jerusalem, so in the Western Church it has been used from the earliest¹ times as a preliminary anthem to invite the congregation to worship.

In the first part² the Psalmist appeals to us by the goodness of God. With the joyousness of David's spirit he sees the whole world is instinct with the presence of God; he sees that there is no varied distribution of the powers of nature, but that Jehovah is the Lord alike of the depth and of the height, alike of the sunlit peaks³ of the North and of the 'many-twinkling smile' of the Western sea⁴.

¹ Cp. Palmer's *Orig. Liturg.* i. 222.

³ v. 4.

² vv. 1-6.

⁴ v. 5.

So far the Psalm has dealt only with the relation of God to the world, and the joy of the Psalmist is as yet unclouded ; but now when he turns to speak of God's dealings with Israel¹, he thinks of man's relation to God, and then the tone is suddenly² changed. He passes at once from the joyous feeling of David to the melancholy depression of a prophet, from the poet interpreting nature to the preacher interpreting the history of man. He had spoken of the Land of Promise, he now reminds Israel of the condition on which they held that land. God has done His part by restoring them to their country, they must do theirs by listening to His voice, and the decision must be immediate. 'To-day,' cries the Psalmist, 'Jehovah is our God again and we 'are the sheep of His pasture once more, if only we obey his voice, the 'voice of One who pleads tenderly with us as a father with a child, 'and prays us not to harden our hearts, not to force Him to use the 'rod of chastisement again.' His goodness, it is implied, is so absolutely checked by that higher law of holiness which His justice dictates, that before He can treat Israel as His children, they must obey Him as their God.

The Psalm has been set to music by Mendelssohn, and no commentary can rival his music in bringing out the meaning of the transition. By a change which none can misunderstand, it passes from man's jubilant exultation in God's omnipotence to the still small voice of God addressed in warning to His people.

The plaintive allusions to Meribah and Massah, the scenes of the 'strivings' of Israel in the wilderness, must have been especially touching to those who had themselves felt the wrath of God for more than forty years in their captivity, and who were living in a time when the past history of their country was being studied with an unwonted zeal.

To all times the Psalm with its two strophes speaks against two errors—the narrowness of those who would shroud God's kindness in the terrors of His justice, the rashness of forgetting the obedience He requires in the enjoyment of the pleasures He provides.

¹ v. 7.² v. 8.

I. *Invitation to praise.*

O come let us sing unto the Lord, 1
 let us heartily rejoice in the rock of our salvation;
 let us come before His presence with thanksgiving, 2
 and shew ourselves glad in Him with psalms!
 for Jehovah is a great god 3
 and a great king above all gods:
 in His hand are all the corners of the earth, 4
 and the heights of the hills are His also:
 the sea is His and He made it, 5
 and His hands prepared the dry land.
 O come let us worship and fall down, 6
 and kneel before Jehovah, our maker!

II. *Warning against unbelief.*

For HE is the Lord our God, 7
 and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His
 hand—
 to-day, if ye will hear His voice— 8
 harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
 and as in the day of Massah in the wilderness,
 when your fathers tempted ME, 9
 proved ME and saw MY works!
 forty years long was I grieved with this generation 10
 and said 'It is a people that do err in their hearts,
 and have not known MY ways,'
 unto whom I swear in MY wrath, 11
 that they should not enter into MY rest.

Ver. 1. *salvation, i. e.* deliverance from captivity.

Ver. 8. *Meribah.* Cp. Ex. xvii. 7.

Ver. 9. *proved Me, i. e.* tempted Me, tested My forbearance. *My works, i. e.* the punishments I inflicted on them.

Ver. 11. *rest, i. e.* the land of promise. Cp. Deut. xii. 9, 'For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which Jehovah your God giveth you.'

§ 112. PSALM C.

AMONG the Psalms of triumph and thanksgiving this stands pre-eminent, as rising to the highest point of joy and grandeur. No local restrictions, no national exclusiveness can find place in the contemplation of God as the common Creator and Father of man: hence it is that no hymn or psalm in any subsequent age has found a readier response than this first appeal to the whole world to unite in worshipping Jehovah on the ground of a common sonship and humanity.

I. *Praise to God for His might in creation,*

O be joyful in Jehovah, all ye lands!	1
serve Jehovah with gladness,	
and come before His presence with a song!	
be ye sure that Jehovah He is God,	2
it is He that hath made us and we are His,	
we are His people and the sheep of His pasture!	

II. *and His lovingkindness towards the children of men.*

O go your way into His gates with thanksgiving,	3
and into His courts with praise!	
be thankful unto Him and speak good of His name!	
for the Lord is gracious; His mercy is everlasting,	4
and His truth endureth from generation to generation!	

Ver. 4. *truth, i. e.* fulfilment of promise.

§ 113. PSALM LXVII.

HERE we find an expansion of the old blessing pronounced in Numbers¹ upon the children of Israel. Like that blessing upon their ancestors, it was probably delivered by a priest; unlike it,

¹ Cp. Num. vi. 24.

it looks far beyond the limits of Judæa and the immediate prosperity of the Hebrew nation. It breathes the sense of a new relation, of duty towards the heathen world, which was the inestimable advantage derived from the freer intercourse with foreigners under the monarchy, and from the severer lessons of subjugation and captivity¹.

I. *Prayer that the rule of the God of Israel*

God be merciful unto us and bless us,	1
and shew us the light of His countenance and be merciful	
unto us!	
that Thy way may be known upon earth,	2
Thy saving health among all nations!	
let the people praise Thee, O God!	3
yea, let all the people praise Thee!	
O let the nations rejoice and be glad,	4
for Thou shalt judge the peoples righteously,	
and govern the nations upon earth!	

II. *may be extended over all nations of the earth.*

Let the peoples praise Thee, O God,	5
yea, let all the peoples praise Thee!	
the earth giveth forth her increase,	6
let God, even our own God, give us His blessing!	
yea, let God give us His blessing,	7
and all the ends of the world shall fear Him!	

Ver. 2. *way, i. e.* Thy dealings with Thy people.

§ 114. PSALM LXVIII.

THE grandest and most elaborate of all the Dedication Odes. It celebrates the second dedication of the Temple, 'when the House of the Lord was finished' and 'the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the children of captivity, kept the dedication

¹ Cp. Haggai throughout.

of the House of God with joy¹, for 'the people had considered their ways².' No longer did 'they dwell in their cieled houses and the House of the Lord lie waste².' No more 'should the heavens be stayed from dew, and the earth be stayed from her fruit².' 'Jehovah had inherited Judah His portion in the Holy Land and had chosen Jerusalem again³. 'He had brought His people from the East country and the West country:' 'they were again His people, and He was again their God⁴.'

This recent deliverance from captivity was the thought with which all hearts were full, and is celebrated in the song of triumph which forms the centre of the Psalm⁵. In the last few years the Jews had re-enacted the most glorious passages of their history, the Exodus from Egypt, the victories of the Judges and the triumphal enthronement of the ark under David. Hence it is that as the procession marches towards Mount Sion, the national joy finds expression in the great songs of old. The language of the Psalm is thus archaic and grand, nor is the imagery employed inferior to the language in magnificence. God Himself marches through the wilderness in triumph at the head of the victorious host to enthrone Himself upon His holy hill, 'to fill His House with glory' and 'to make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all nations⁶.' He is ready to issue from its citadel as from His earthly home to take vengeance on those who had profanely tried to dispossess Him of His Sanctuary⁷.

As the opening words are a repetition of the old chant with which the Levites accompanied the raising of the Ark when changing their encampment in the wilderness; so the whole Psalm throughout is modelled on the pattern of earlier songs of victory. It seems especially to echo⁸ the notes of the Psalm of Deborah, and indeed without a reference to that Psalm it can hardly be understood. In fact, allusion to other poems well known to the hearers but lost to us, seems to afford the only explanation of the almost hopeless obscurity of many parts of the Psalm. The ideas and imagery are the same as those of the second Isaiah⁹.

¹ Ezra vi. 15, 16.

⁴ Zech. viii. 7, 8.

⁷ *vv.* 22, 23.

² Haggai i. 4, 5, 10.

⁵ *vv.* 7—23.

⁸ *vv.* 9, 13, 29. See Supplement.

³ Zech. ii. 12.

⁶ Zech. xii. 2.

⁹ xl—lxvi.

The prelude and the conclusion seem to have been chanted by the priests, the central ode by the whole body of the people; though the fourfold division of this central portion makes it possible that it was chanted by the representatives of the two pairs of northern and southern tribes, accompanied by the four courses of priests, which alone returned from the exile¹. The names of Zebulon and Naphtali may have been selected to stand for the whole northern kingdom, from a recollection of the honour which was paid to them in the great utterance of Deborah². That members of the northern tribes accompanied the return of the southern, though not specially mentioned, has been inferred from the passages in the book of Ezra, where of the 42,000 of the return, 30,000 alone are assigned to the two southern tribes; from which it has been concluded that the remaining 12,000 belonged to the northern section of the kingdom. That, at all events in idea, the people of Jerusalem considered themselves as the representatives of the whole people and looked upon their city as the holy metropolis of Palestine, is clear from their offering separate sin-offerings for the twelve tribes³, and from the mention in some of the Psalms⁴ of Joseph as the especial representative of the northern tribes.

These claims of Jerusalem were recognized even at an earlier time by the people of the north, as appears from the pilgrimage from her once rival cities,—Sichem, Shiloh, and Samaria,—which met with such a tragical fate at the hands of the treacherous Ishmael⁵. This is a clear proof that even as early as the time of Jeremiah the Samaritans must have acknowledged the very pretensions which they had ‘laughed to scorn’ in the reign of Hezekiah⁶.

I. *Praise of God who hath led His people through the wilderness from Babylon,*
 Let God arise, and His enemies shall be scattered; I
 they also that hate Him shall flee before Him;

Ver. 1. *arise*; a quotation from Numbers x. 35. *scattered*, i.e. as the Egyptian host was, when God looked upon it (Ex, xiv. 24).

¹ Cp. Neh. vii. 39—42.

² Judg. v. See *Supplement of Hebrew Lyrics*.

³ § 81. lxxvii. (sons of Jacob and Joseph); § 112. lxxx; § 129. lxxxii.

⁴ Jer. xli. 5—8.

⁵ Ezra vi. 17.

⁶ 2 Chron. xxx. 10, 11.

like as the smoke vanisheth away, 2
 and like as wax melteth at the fire,
 so shall the ungodly perish at the presence of God ;
 but the righteous shall be glad and rejoice before God, 3
 they shall also be merry and joyful.
 O sing unto God and sing praises unto His name, 4
 make a way for Him that rideth through the wilderness,
 —JAH is His name—and rejoice before Him !
 He is the father of the fatherless and defendeth the cause of the 5
 widows,
 even God in His holy habitation :
 God bringeth home them that are scattered abroad, 6
 He freeth the prisoners from captivity and blesseth them,
 but letteth the rebellious dwell in a parched land.

II. as He had led their fathers from Egypt by the hand of Moses and Joshua,

O God, when Thou wentest forth before Thy people, 7
 when Thou didst march through the wilderness,
 the earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God, 8
 even that Sinai shook at the presence of God, who is the
 God of Israel :
 Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain on Thine inheritance, 9
 and refreshedst it when it was weary ;
 Thy people hath dwelt therein, 10
 for Thou, O God, hast of Thy goodness prepared it for the
 poor.

Vv. 4, 7, 8. Compare the procession of the Ark through the wilderness in Num. x. For the return from Babylon see Is. xxxv. xl. 3 ; the liberation from captivity is there alluded to in vv. 5, 6. *make a way, i. e.* as pioneers for a royal progress.

Ver. 5. *habitation, i. e.* in heaven.

Vv. 7—9. The meaning appears to be that the same God who revealed Himself in storms on Sinai also revealed Himself in gracious rain, preparing the promised land for the coming of the Israelites. The words are of course taken from Judg. v. 4—6, 30. For the celebration of victories by choruses of women (ver. 11), see Ex. xv. 20, 1 Sam. xviii. 6, 7. For the division of the spoil (ver. 12), see Judg. v. 11, in *Supplement of Hebrew Lyrics. that Sinai, i. e.* Sinai yonder : Deborah is pointing to the mountain.

Ver. 10. *poor, i. e.* oppressed. See Glossary.

when He slew kings for their sake, and sent hailstones from heaven to destroy them.

The Lord giveth us a song of victory, 11
 great is the company of the women that tell it abroad;
 kings with their armies flee and are discomfited, 12
 she that tarrieth at home divideth the spoil:
 'when ye rest among the pastures, 13
 'then are the wings of a dove covered with silver,
 'and her feathers with shining gold;
 'but when the Highest scattereth kings, 14
 'then is there snow on Salmon.'

Sion hath He chosen for His dwelling, and hath mounted it in triumph,

A hill of God is the hill of Basan, 15
 even an high hill is the hill of Basan:
 wherefore look ye askance, ye high hills? 16
 this is God's hill where it pleaseth Him to dwell,
 yea, Jehovah will abide in it for ever!
 lo, the chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands 17
 on thousands—
 the Lord is therein—Sinai is in the Sanctuary!

Ver. 13, 14. Probably a quotation from a song of victory. The allusion is to the play of colour on the wings of a dove. The meaning apparently is, 'When ye (the men of Israel) rest on the soft pastures of Palestine after war, then are the wings of the dove illumined with gold, as the fields are covered with sunshine: still when Jehovah willet to destroy kings to preserve His inheritance, then doth He send hailstones and snow from heaven:' cp. the battle of Beth-horon under Joshua [x. 11], and Judg. v. 19, 20. The rarity of *snow* in Palestine caused it to be regarded as an especial wonder. Job xxxviii. 22, 'Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?' *Salmon*, possibly the hill of this name near Shechem, mentioned in Judges ix. 48; a low hill, where snow would be unusual.

Ver. 15. *Basan* was bounded on the north by the range of Anti-Libanus: of which Hermon the southern peak was the loftiest and grandest hill in Palestine; it had a claim to be ranked as a 'hill of God,' but He chose the hill of Sion for His residence. For the priority thus bestowed upon Sion cp. § 36. xlviii. and notes.

Ver. 16. *askance*, i. e. with jealousy.

Thou art gone up on high, Thou hast led up a multitude of
captives, 18

Thou hast received gifts of men;
yea, even His enemies shall rest near Jehovah our God.

and hath signally delivered His chosen from death.

Blessed be the Lord; even the God who helpeth us, 19
who doth bear our burdens day by day;

the God who is the God of our salvation, 20
and the Lord Jehovah by whom we escape death:

yea, God will wound the head of His enemies, 21
and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his
wickedness:

the Lord hath said—I will fetch him again from Basan, 22
I will fetch him again from the deep of the sea,

that thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, 23
and that the tongue of thy dogs may be red through the same.

III. *The priest describeth the procession to the Temple,*

It is well seen, O God, how Thou goest, 24
how Thou, my God and king, wentest to the sanctuary;

the singers went before, the minstrels followed after, 25
in the midst were the damsels, playing with the timbrels;

give thanks unto God in the congregation, 26
even unto the Lord, ye that come of the waters of Israel:

Ver. 18. *gone up on high.* God is represented as taking possession of Sion as an earthly conqueror of a conquered citadel, Hab. iii. 8. Here we have extracts from an ancient Psalm. *Sinai.* The honours of Sinai are now transferred to Sion (ver. 17), and God and the heavenly train are pictured as moving in triumphal procession thence to Sion and leading His enemies as captives. *gifts of men, i.e.* of the rebellious, who have become the vassals of Jehovah and do Him homage.

Vv. 22, 23. Again a quotation from some now lost Psalm. The meaning is, 'Should their enemies in the day of judgment hide in Bashan or in the deep sea, I the Lord will drag them forth.' cp. the picture of the desolation of Israel in Amos ix. 3, 'Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence, and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent and he shall bite them.'

Ver. 26. *waters of Israel.* The lineage of Israel is likened to the source of a river, in Is. xlviii. 1, li. 1, where 'the hole of the pit' means the spring or well, which was the source of the nation; and possibly Deut. xxxiii. 28.

there was little Benjamin their leader, 27
 the mighty host, even the princes of Judah,
 the princes of Zebulon and the princes of Naphthali.

and prophesieth that kings shall come there to pay their homage to Jehovah.

Set forth Thy glory, O God! 28
 glorify, O God, the thing which Thou hast wrought for us!
 for Thy Temple's sake at Jerusalem 29
 let kings bring homage unto Thee!
 rebuke the beast of the reeds, the multitude of bulls with the 30
 calves—his peoples,
 so that they humbly bring pieces of silver;
 yea, scatter Thou the peoples that delight in war;
 then shall princes come out of Egypt, 31
 and Ethiopia quickly stretch out her hand unto God.

who, though He be king of Heaven, yet hath His earthly throne in Zion.

Sing unto God, O ye kingdoms of the earth, 32
 sing praises unto the Lord,

Ver. 27. *Benjamin—Judah—Zebulon—Naphthali*; four tribes are mentioned here: Zebulon and Naphthali represent the Northern kingdom; Judah and Benjamin the Southern. *little*, as being the smallest tribe. *leader*, because Saul the first king came from it. *mighty host*, because Judah was the most populous tribe. See Gen. xlix. 8.

Ver. 28. *Set forth Thy glory*. A prayer that God will manifest His glory from this His newly consecrated Temple as He had of old from the Temple of Solomon.

Ver. 30. *the beast of the reeds*. Under the image of king of the jungle, surrounded by bisons and calves, is typified the great Persian king, with his train of satraps and subject peoples. So the kings of Babylon and Egypt are typified by the dragons of the river or crocodiles, § 120. lxxiv. 14, Ezek. xxix. 3, and Is. li. 9, 'Art Thou not he that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?'

Ver. 31. *then—God*. Cp. Is. xix. 23—25, 'In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria; and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt, and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land, whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria, the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance.' *Ethiopia*. Cp. Is. xlv. 14, 'They (the Ethiopians) shall fall down unto thee (Israel), they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, 'God is in thee only; and besides there is none else.''

who rideth through the heaven of heavens which is of old, 33
—lo, He doth send out His voice, yea, and that a mighty
voice!—

ascribe ye power unto God, whose majesty ruleth over Israel, 34
and whose strength is in the clouds!

terrible art Thou, O God, from out Thy sanctuary! 35

even the God of Israel, He will give strength and power
unto His people;

blessed be God!

Ver. 33. *heaven of heavens, i. e.* the highest heavens, cp. Deut. x. 14. *which is of old, i. e.* first created.

§ 115. PSALM XLVII.*

A PSALM composed for the dedication of the Temple, and sung
during the procession¹.

I. *Invitation to all lands to praise Jehovah,*

O clap your hands together, all ye peoples, 1

O sing unto God with the voice of melody!

for Jehovah is high and to be feared, 2

He is the great king over all the earth;

He subdueth the peoples under us, 3

and the nations under our feet:

He chooseth out an heritage for us, 4

even Jacob's glory which He loved.

II. *whose earthly throne is at Zion,*

God is gone up with a merry noise, 5

Jehovah with the sound of a trumpet;

Ver. 4. *Jacob's glory, i. e.* the Holy Land. Cp. § 49. lxi. 6, Ez. xx. 15, 'That I would bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands,' and Ez. xxiv. 21, 'the excellency of your strength.'

Ver. 5. *is gone up.* Cp. § 114. lxviii. 18.

* See Introduction, § 114.

¹ v. 5.

O sing praises, sing praises unto our God, 6
 O sing praises, sing praises unto our King!
 for God is the king of all the earth; 7
 O sing unto Him a glorious song.
 God reigneth over the heathen, 8
 God sitteth upon His holy seat!

III. *where chieftains do Him homage, for He is the King of kings.*

The princes of the peoples have gathered themselves together 9
 at the Temple of the God of Abraham;
 for the shields of the earth belong unto God,
 and He is highly exalted!

Ver. 7. *glorious*, literally 'a skilfully constructed song,' *i.e.* to be accompanied with more elaborate music: the word 'maschil' occurs in the musical direction superscribed to 14 Psalms. See Appendix B. 4.

Ver. 9. *princes*. Cp. Is. xiv. 1. The princes probably were Persian emissaries, but the precise reference is unknown. *shields*, *i.e.* chiefs. The word is rendered 'rulers' Hos. iv. 18.

§ 116. PSALM LXVI. I—II.

THE first¹ part of the 66th Psalm is another echo of the feelings of the nation at this epoch, in which they seemed to be living over again the times of the great deliverances under Moses.

I. *An appeal to all nations to recognise God's power:*

O be joyful in God, all ye lands! I
 sing praises unto the honour of His name,
 make His praise to be glorious!
 say unto God, 'Oh, how wonderful art Thou in Thy works! 2
 'through the greatness of Thy power Thine enemies feign
 obedience unto Thee:

Ver. 2. *feign obedience*, or pay Thee court. Pr. Bk. 'were found liars,' as Deut. xxxiii. 29. See Glossary, 'liars.' *Thine enemies*, the heathen, comprised in 'all the world,' or all nations ver. 3.

¹ For the 2nd part, see § 30, where the reasons for the separation of the 66th into two Psalms have been given.

‘all the world doth worship Thee, sing of Thee
 ‘and praise Thy Name!’ 3

II. *for He, as from Egypt of yore, so now*

O come hither and behold the works of God, 4
 how wonderful He is in His doing toward the children of men !
 He turned the sea into dry land, 5
 so that they went through the water on foot ;
 there did we rejoice in Him.
 He ruleth with His power for ever ; 6
 His eyes behold the peoples,
 and as for the rebellious, they shall not be able to exalt
 themselves.

III. *hath delivered us from captivity and slavery.*

O praise our God, ye peoples, 7
 and make the voice of His praise to be heard !
 who hath held our soul in life, 8
 and suffered not our feet to slip !
 for Thou, O God, hast proved us, 9
 Thou hast tried us like as silver is tried :
 Thou broughtest us into the net, 10
 and laidest a sore burden upon our loins ;
 Thou sufferedst men to ride over our heads, 11
 we went through fire and water,
 and Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

Ver. 10. *into the net*, or snare, so as to be the prey of the enemies' hand, hence into captivity. Cp. Hos. vii. 12. *a burden upon our loins*, made us like beasts of burden, *i.e.* brought us into slavery.

Ver. 11. *Thou—heads*. Cp. Is. li. 23, ‘They that afflict thee have said to thy soul, ‘Bow down that we may go over,’ and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, as the street for them that went over.’

§§ 117, 118. THE EFFECT OF THE CAPTIVITY UPON THE
NATIONAL CHARACTER. PSALMS XCI, CXXXIX.

THE destruction and the restoration of the Temple brought with them each its own great lesson. Aversion to idolatry¹ as the cause of their degradation was the lesson of the fall of the Temple; its restoration naturally rekindled the fervour of religious enthusiasm, and called forth a fresh flow of exulting faith and confidence in Jehovah.

As David poured out his heart to God² in the first flood tide of gratitude for His past protection by announcing his resolution to undertake all his work thenceforth in Jehovah's name and as Jehovah's vicegerent, so the Psalmist of the Restoration pours forth his thankfulness with a freshness of feeling and a nobleness of language, which have made these two Psalms for all time at once the amplest exhibition of faith in God's protection amid danger, and of man's belief in that inscrutable connexion between himself and his Maker which is the true source at once of his humility and of his dignity.

These Psalms are the mirror, so to speak, which reflects the permanent effect of the Restoration upon the national character, and in this lies their significance. They contain no new truths: Prophet and Psalmist have often before uttered words as comforting and truths as elevated; but now these words and these truths have struck root in the general belief. The people see in the Restoration a fresh and most signal confirmation of them; and the Psalmist proclaims them anew with a conviction so deep and a power so irresistible, that they acquire in his mouth a new reality. It is no longer the word of Jehovah, addressed by His servants to an inattentive nation; it is rather the word of Jehovah sunk into the nation's heart, intertwined with its inmost thoughts and deepest experiences, and now reappearing in the words of the Psalmist, the mouthpiece of the nation, as at once the record of his and their faith, and the utterance as of an oracle

¹ Cp. § 102. xcv. and Introduction to Book IV. p. 231.

² Ps. ci.

for their daily guidance and warning. Upon this calm and blissful height of unwavering faith the Psalmist stands; the consciousness of God's presence has become an abiding reality, by which the very language of human thought and feeling is invested and transfigured with a celestial radiance and glory.

§ 117. PSALM XCI.

I. *The Psalmist addressing his soul declareth the safety of all who trust in God;*

Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the most High, 1
 shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty :
 I will say unto Jehovah, 'Thou art my refuge and my stronghold, 2
 'my God, in Him will I trust :
 'for He shall deliver thee from the snare of the hunter, 3
 'and from the noisome pestilence ;
 'He shall defend thee under His wings, 4
 'and thou shalt be safe under His feathers :
 'His faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler :
 'thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night, 5
 'nor for the arrow that flieth by day,
 'for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, 6
 'nor for the sickness that destroyeth in the noonday ;
 'a thousand shall fall beside thee and ten thousand at thy right 7
 hand :
 'but it shall not come nigh thee ;
 'only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, 8
 'and see the reward of the ungodly.'

II. *he again addresseth his soul.*

'For Thou, Jehovah, art my refuge ; 9
 'thou hast chosen the most High for thine house of defence ;

Vv. 1—3. For the change from 3rd to 1st, and afterwards (ver. 9) to the 2nd person, cp. Job xii. 4. *thee*, ver. 3, *i. e.* the Psalmist. *defence of the most High, i. e.* Sion.

Ver. 8. *only with thine eyes*. Thou shalt be so far removed from it as not to feel it, but only to see it at a distance.

'there shall no evil happen unto thee, 10
 'neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling;
 'but He shall give His angels charge over thee 11
 'to keep thee in all thy ways,
 'they shall bear thee in their hands, 12
 'that thou hurt not thy foot against a stone;
 'thou shalt go upon the lion and adder, 13
 'the young lion and the dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet.'
 Because (*saith Jehovah*) he hath set his love upon Me, 14
 therefore will I deliver him,
 I will set him up, because he hath known My name;
 he shall call upon Me and I will hear him, 15
 yea, I am with him in trouble,
 I will deliver him and bring him to honour;
 with long life will I satisfy him, 16
 and shew him My salvation.

Vv. 14—16. A sudden transition. *he, i. e.* the Psalmist, as *thou*, ver. 9, is 'the Psalmist' also.

§ 118. PSALM CXXXIX.

THIS may be considered as the counterpart of the 8th Psalm. In both two cardinal truths are found; on the one hand, the infinite and mysterious connexion of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God; on the other, the insignificance of man and his dependence on God, as Creator, upholder and ever-present friend. The first expression of these truths was in the words of David; 'Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him?' and again, 'Thou madest him a little lower than God.' The experience of three centuries of affliction, such as no nation had yet undergone and survived, had put these truths to the test and stamped them as eternal verities upon a thousand hearts; all that was holiest and dearest to the devout Jews had perished; but the spiritual connexion of every human soul with God was only the more firmly rooted in their belief, and it finds expression in this Psalm in language as tender and as grand as that of David himself.

In the light of these truths the Psalmist utters a solemn meditation upon his position in the universe and his relation to God. No human pen or tongue has ever expressed more vividly or more profoundly the idea of the omnipresence of God. In all places, in all time, man is beset and encompassed by God; in Him we live and move and have our being; our every thought is guided, our every step controlled. But the thought produces no sense of oppression, no desire to escape from the eye of God. On the contrary, all is light and liberty. There is an undertone of bright acquiescence; an instinctive recognition by man's spirit of the inevitable control of the kindred Spirit of God, in whose likeness his own spirit was made. This calm satisfaction in the presence of God makes the whole Psalm one of the greatest lessons of life for all time. By its teaching we learn that it is only by rejoicing in that presence, by resting lovingly on that love, by clinging with childlike affection to the fatherly arms which surround us in life, which 'ordered our days, when as yet there was none of them,'—that man can fulfil the end of his being.

This sense of the close dependence of man upon God and the possibility of close communion between the human and the Divine spirit produces in the Psalmist the feeling which it always arouses when it breaks in all its fulness upon the soul. Evil in the soul and in the world around is felt to be appalling and intolerable. The mystery of iniquity becomes more and more unintelligible. What fellowship can there be between light and darkness? Surely God will 'put on the garments of vengeance for clothing and be clad with zeal as a cloke; according to their deeds will He repay them, fury to His adversaries and recompence to His enemies¹.' Thus the apparently unconnected outburst at the close of the Psalm is seen to be in necessary connexion with the preceding meditation on God's ways. For desire for the reformation of the world and for the sanctification of the spirit, the longing to see the world verily the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and to be ourselves perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect, is the necessary result in every man of a real conviction of God's presence in the world and in the soul.

¹ Is. lix, 17, 18.

That the final prayer is for vengeance rather than for mercy is an accident of the time at which it was composed, and it does not diminish from the nobility of the thought that the Psalmist had not anticipated the gentle influences of a dispensation which he did not live to see.

I. *God knoweth all things.*

Jehovah, Thou hast searched me out and known me!	I
yea, Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising,	
Thou understandest my thoughts long before,	
Thou art about my path and about my bed,	2
and spiest out all my ways:	
for lo! the word is not yet upon my tongue—	3
but Thou, Jehovah, knowest it altogether;	
Thou hast compassed me behind and before	4
and laid Thine hand upon me;	
such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me,	5
I cannot attain unto it!	

II. *God is everywhere.*

Whither shall I go then from Thy spirit?	6
or whither shall I go then from Thy presence?	
if I climb up into heaven, Thou art there,	7
if I go down into hell, Thou art there also!	
if I take the wings of the morning,	8
and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea,	
even there shall Thy hand lead me,	9
and Thy right hand shall hold me!	
if I say, 'peradventure the darkness shall cover me	10
'and the day be turned into night about me,'	

Vv. 6—11. For the whole thought of these verses, cp. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24, "Am I a God at hand," saith Jehovah, "and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?" saith Jehovah. "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" saith Jehovah.

Ver. 8. *parts of the sea*, i.e. if like the first ray of the rising sun which darts across to the far west, I flee to the utmost horizon of the sea. *The sea* stands for *the west*, in all the Scriptures which were written in Palestine. Cp. § 134. cvii. 3, note.

Ver. 10. *If I say*, i.e. if I reach the far west—the land of sunset and darkness—and the day be turned into night.

even then the darkness is no darkness with Thee, 11
 but the night is as clear as the day,
 the darkness and light to Thee are both alike!

III. *God is all-merciful.*

For my reins are the work of Thine hand, 12
 Thou hast formed me in my mother's womb,
 I will give thanks unto Thee, for I am fearfully and wonder- 13
 fully made,
 marvellous are Thy works,—
 and that my soul knoweth right well!
 my bones were not hid from Thee, 14
 when I was made secretly
 and fashioned beneath in the earth:
 Thine eyes did see my substance yet being imperfect, 15
 and in Thy book were all my days written,
 yea, the days were already ordered, when as yet there was 16
 none of them:
 how manifold are Thy thoughts—they overwhelm me, O God; 17
 O how great is the sum of them!
 if I tell them, they are more in number than the sand; 18
 when I wake up, I am present with Thee.

IV. *God punisheth the wicked.*

Wilt not Thou slay the wicked, O God! 19
 depart from me, ye bloodthirsty men!
 for they speak unrighteously against Thee, 20
 and take Thy covenant wickedly in their mouth!

Ver. 11. *night as clear.* Cp. Job xxvi. 6, 'Hell is naked before Him and destruction hath no covering,' and Job xxxiv. 21, 22.

Ver. 12. *reins.* See Glossary.

Vv. 14, 15. Cp. Job x. 8—11.

Ver. 17. *thy thoughts, i. e.* God's counsels in the creation and government of the universe, which are ever-present and overwhelming both in number and in weight. 'How heavy are Thy thoughts' is the literal rendering of the first line of the verse.

Ver. 20. *take Thy covenant—mouth.* Cp. § 59. l. 16.

should not I hate them that hate Thee, O Jehovah? 21
 should not I be grieved with those that rise up against Thee?
 yea, I hate them right sore, 22
 I have counted them mine enemies!
 try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart, 23
 prove me and examine my thoughts!
 look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, 24
 and lead me in the way everlasting!

§§ 119—127. PSALMS XLIV, LXXIV, LXXIX, LXXX, CXXXII,
LXXXIX, LX, LXXXV, LXXXIII.

THIS group of Psalms expresses the anguish and perplexity which had overtaken the Jews in a moment of expected triumph; and though from the scantiness of contemporaneous historical records it is no longer possible to trace the details of the calamity, it is still easy to gather from the general language the outline of a distinct picture.

Zerubbabel the prince and Jeshua the high priest had fulfilled the exalted hopes entertained of them¹ not only by rebuilding the walls but by uniting the citizens in the only true bond of union, the bond of obedience to God and of observance of His religion. The people as was but natural saw in this revival the approach of that glorious time, when the true Israel should dwell in the city of David, amid security and blessing such as since David's time had never been known.

But the expected blessings came not. Not even the prince of the house of David, to whose pen two Psalms² from this group are due, could address Jehovah in other than a dejected tone. Dejection characterizes the first³; but in the second⁴ actual miseries, defeat in war and the conquest of the city and the Temple, are depicted with a despair which would not be comforted. Other⁵ Psalms, from other pens, complete the picture. Desolation reigns, not only in the land⁶ but in the Holy City, nay, even in the very Temple and house of prayer.

¹ Haggai ii. 20—22; Zech. iii. 8; iv. vi. 9—15.

² § 123, cxxxii.

³ xliv, lx, lxxix, lxxx, lxxxi—lxxxv,

⁴ §§ 123, 124, lxxxix, cxxxii.

⁵ § 124, lxxxix.

⁶ Cp. § 95. cxxviii. 2, note.

How long this desolation lasted, we cannot tell. Nehemiah speaks of the walls and the gates of Jerusalem as dismantled even in his day; and there is little doubt that the very loyalty of the Jews to Jehovah and the religion of their forefathers, which tended to preserve their national existence, at the same time by rousing the jealousy of the Persian court directly conduced to their continued oppression.

§ 119. PSALM XLIV.

I. *Israel in memory of former blessings,*

We have heard with our ears, O God, 1
 our fathers have told us,
 what Thou hast done in their time,
 in the time of old :
 how Thou hast driven out the heathen with Thy hand but 2
 planted *them* in,
 how Thou hast destroyed the nations but spread *them* abroad ;
 for they gat not the land in possession through their own sword, 3
 neither was it their own arm that helped them ;
 but Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy 4
 countenance,
 because Thou hadst a favour unto them :
 Thou art my king, O God ! 5
 send help unto Jacob !
 through Thee will we overthrow our enemies, 6
 and in Thy name will we tread them under that rise up
 against us ;
 for I will not trust in my bow, 7
 it is not my sword that shall help me,

Ver. 2. *them, i. e.* our forefathers. The word is emphatic.

spread them abroad, i. e. extended their borders. Cp. § 122. lxxx. 8—11.

Ver. 5. *Jacob*, more commonly Israel, the name given to Jacob after his wrestling with the angel. The name was originally applied to the twelve tribes collectively (Ex. iii. 16); after the captivity the returned exiles, though mainly of the kingdom of Judah, resumed the name of Israel as their common designation. Cp. § 4. xxiv. 6; § 115. xlvii. 4, where 'Jacob's glory' means the Holy Land.

but it is Thou that savedst us from our enemies, 8
 and didst put them to confusion that hate us;
 we make our boast of God all day long, 9
 and will praise Thy name for ever!

II. *complaineth of the present evils,*

But now Thou hast cast us off and put us to confusion, 10
 and goest not forth with our armies;
 Thou makest us to turn our backs before our enemies, 11
 so that they which hate us spoil our goods;
 Thou lettest us be eaten up like sheep, 12
 and hast scattered us among the heathen;
 Thou sellest Thy people for nought, 13
 and takest no money for them;
 Thou makest us to be rebuked of our neighbours, 14
 a scorn and derision to them that are round about us:
 Thou makest us to be a byword among the heathen, 15
 so that the peoples shake their heads at us;
 my confusion is daily before me, 16
 and the shame of my face hath covered me,
 for the voice of the slanderer and blasphemer, 17
 for the enemy and bloodthirsty man!

III. *and professing faithfulness, crieth unto God for succour.*

Though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget Thee, 18
 neither have we dealt falsely in Thy covenant,
 our heart is not turned back, 19
 neither our steps gone out of Thy way,
 no, not when Thou hast smitten us into the place of jackals, 20
 and covered us with the shadow of death!

Ver. 13. *for nought.* For the expression cp. Jer. xv. 13, 'without price.'

Ver. 15. *shake their heads.* Cp. Jer. xviii. 16.

Ver. 20. *the place of jackals* (A.V. 'den of dragons'), is the symbol of desolation. Cp. Jer. ix. 11 and x. 22; Is. xxxiv. 13, 'It shall be an habitation of dragons (jackals) and a count for owls.'

if we have forgotten the name of our God, 21
 and holden up our hands to any strange god,
 shall not God search it out,
 for He knoweth the very secrets of the heart?
 nay, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long, 22
 and are counted as sheep appointed to be slain!
 up, Lord! why sleepest Thou? 23
 awake and be not absent from us for ever!
 wherefore hidest Thou Thy face, 24
 and forgettest our misery and trouble?
 for our soul is brought low, even to the dust, 25
 our belly cleaveth unto the ground:
 arise and help us, 26
 and deliver us for Thy mercies' sake!

Ver. 21. *if—strange god*, this appeal to the national freedom from idolatry is characteristic of the period after the captivity. See § 107. xcvi. *History*, and the 2nd Isaiah, who wrote after the captivity, xl. 19, 20, xli. 7, xlii. 17, and especially xlv. 14—17.

§ 120. PSALM LXXIV.

THE misery of the Jews is here at its deepest; the Holy Place of the Temple was defiled by the banners of the heathen¹; its new decorations were ruthlessly destroyed²; the Prophets had succumbed to the persecution³; the enemy stood scoffing⁴ by; the very caverns⁵ which nature provided as a refuge for the oppressed were now in the hands of the oppressor.

If any drop of bitterness were still wanting to fill their cup of misery, it was added by the thought of the contrast presented by this partial deliverance from thralldom⁶ with the triumphant and marvellous Exodus of their forefathers from Egypt⁷. The very thought of the omnipotence of God suggested to them the fearful misgiving that they were no longer the favoured objects of His protection.

¹ v. 5.² v. 7.³ v. 10.⁴ Neh. vi. 14.⁵ v. 21.⁶ Cp. vv. 11, 12 with vv. 13—16.⁷ Neh. ix.

I. *The prophet complaineth of the desolation of the sanctuary;*

O God, wherefore art Thou absent from us so long? 1
 why is Thy wrath so hot against the sheep of Thy pasture?
 O think upon the congregation which Thou hast purchased of old, 2
 and redeemed to be the tribe of Thine inheritance, 3
 and upon mount Sion, wherein Thou hast dwelt!
 lift up Thy feet that Thou mayest utterly destroy all evil doings; 4
 the enemy hath done evil in the sanctuary!
 Thine adversaries roared in the midst of Thy congregation, 5
 and set up their banners for tokens;
 even as though a man should lay to his hand 6
 to hew timber out of the thick trees,
 so now with axes and hammers 7
 they break down all the carved work thereof;
 they have cast fire into Thy holy place, 8
 and have defiled the dwelling-place of Thy name even unto
 the ground,
 yea, they said in their hearts, 'let us make havoc of them 9
 altogether!'
 they burnt up all the houses of God in the land;
 we see not our tokens, 10
 there is not one prophet more,
 neither is there among us any that knoweth 'how long?'

Ver. 5. *roared*, cp. Lam. ii. 7, 'They made a noise in the House of the Lord.'

Vv. 5 and 10. *tokens*. The only symbols of the Divine presence known to the Israelites were the Cherubim. These the heathen destroyed and set up their own symbols instead.

Ver. 9. *houses of God*, i. e. houses of prayer.

Ver. 10. *knoweth*; for the description of the Jewish people in this last stage of decay cp. Is. vi. 11, a passage five times repeated in the New Testament (Matt. xiii. 13; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 39; Acts xxviii. 25), cp. also Lam. ii. 9.

how long? Cp. § 121. lxxix. 5. As the Prophet addressed this wayward generation his spirit sank within him, and he repeats the words, 'Lord, how long?' In the answer to this question was contained at once the darker and the brighter side of the future,—the judgments of prophecy and the great deliverance to which those judgments would lead.

II. *he moveth God to help, by appealing to His deliverances of old,*

O God, how long shall the adversary do this dishonour? 11
 how long shall the enemy blaspheme Thy name, for ever?
 why withdrawest Thou Thy hand, even Thy right hand? 12
 pluck it out of Thy bosom and destroy them!
 for God is my king of old, 13
 the help that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself.
 THOU didst divide the sea through Thy power, 14
 THOU brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters,
 THOU smotest the heads of the Leviathan in pieces, 15
 and gavest him to be meat for a people of the wilderness.
 THOU broughtest out fountains and waters out of the hard rock,
 THOU driedst up mighty waters; 16
 the day is Thine and the night is Thine, 17
 THOU hast prepared the light and the sun,

Ver. 12. *pluck it out.* Cp. Is. li. 9, 10, 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?'

Ver. 14. *dragons, i. e. the crocodile*, which is symbolical of the power of the princes of Egypt; as 'the beast of the reeds' (§ 114. lxviii. 30 and note) is symbolical of the king of Assyria.

Ver. 15. *Leviathan* stands for the crocodile (Job xii.) as Behemoth for the elephant or hippopotamus (Job xl. 15—24). In poetry these names often represented nations, as in Ezek. xxix. 3, 'Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great *dragon* that lieth in the midst of his rivers;' so Isaiah li. 9, 'Thou—that hath cut Rahab and wounded the *dragon*,' i. e. Egypt; and again xxvii. 1, 'Jehovah shall punish Leviathan the running serpent and Leviathan the wreathed serpent, and he shall slay the *dragon* that is in the sea,' where the *dragon* again means Egypt and *Leviathan* probably means the Assyrians, or the Babylonians. So here *Leviathan* might mean the Babylonian empire, (cp. 'the beast of the reeds' § 114. lxviii. 29), out of whose hands the Jews had just escaped; but coming as it does between the mention of 'the dividing of the sea' and 'the bringing of water out of the hard rock' it would seem rather to be a synonym for the dragon, i. e. Egypt. In the apocryphal book of Esdras (2 Esdras xlix. 52) Leviathan is the typical monster of the deep, as Behemoth of the land.

meat for a people of the wilderness, i. e. 'Thou gavest the dead bodies of the Egyptians to be a prey to the tribes of wild beasts inhabiting the wilderness.' The wild beasts are here called a *people* as the locusts a nation in Joel i. 6.

Vv. 17, 18. For this general expression of the beneficent power of God, cp. Is. xlii. 15, xliv. 27, Job xxviii. 10.

THOU hast set all the borders of the earth, 18
 THOU hast made summer and winter!

III. *recounting the blasphemy of His enemies and their oppression of His children.*

Remember this, how the enemy hath rebuked Jehovah, 19
 and foolish people blaspheme Thy name;
 O deliver not the soul of Thy turtle-dove to the multitude 20
 of the robbers,
 and forget not the multitude of Thy poor for ever!
 look upon the covenant; 21
 for the hiding-places of the earth are full of cruel habitations!
 O let not the oppressed go away ashamed, 22
 but let the poor and needy give praise unto Thy name!
 arise, O God! maintain Thine own cause, 23
 remember how the foolish man blasphemeth Thee daily!
 forget not the voice of Thine enemies, 24
 the tumult of them that hate Thee increaseth ever more and
 more!

Ver. 21. *hiding-places*, i.e. refuges or asylums, called 'houses of God' in ver. 9, which should be for the protection of God's people, but which have fallen into the possession of the heathen and are filled with their violence and cruelty.

§ 121. PSALM LXXIX.

THIS Psalm is written in a period of the deepest distress; the city is desolate¹ and the whole nation² oppressed by the cruel thralldom of their heathen oppressors³. The tone of the Psalm is one of exceeding bitterness, naturally called forth by the sufferings of the people and their apparent desertion by God; and the bitterness is enhanced by the sense that at the very moment of their struggle to rise⁴ above their sins and to maintain the religion of Israel, God was

¹ v. 1.

² v. 12.

³ v. 6.

⁴ v. 9.

exacting from them in unrelenting anger¹ the penalty for the iniquity of their forefathers².

The first verse depicts a state of things like that described to Nehemiah by Hanani³, which roused him to get leave from Artaxerxes to undertake the building of Jerusalem: 'I went out by night and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire;' 'then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire; come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach⁴.'

I. The Psalmist complaineth of the desolation of Jerusalem;

O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance, 1
 Thy holy Temple have they defiled,
 and made Jerusalem an heap of stones;
 the dead bodies of Thy servants have they given 2
 to be meat unto the fowls of the air,
 and the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the land:
 their blood have they shed like water 3
 on every side of Jerusalem, and there was no man to bury
 them;
 we are become a reproach to our neighbours, 4
 a very scorn and derision to them that are round about us.
 How long, O Jehovah—? wilt Thou be angry for ever? 5
 shall Thy jealousy burn like fire?

II. he prayeth for vengeance on the enemy and deliverance for Israel,

Pour out Thine indignation upon the heathen that have not 6
 known Thee,
 and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon Thy name,

Ver. 6. The verse is quoted from Jer. x. 25.

¹ v. 5.

² v. 8.

³ Neh. i. 3.

Neh. ii. 13, 17.

for they have devoured Jacob 7
 and laid waste his dwelling-place!
 O remember not against us the sins of our fathers! 8
 but have mercy upon us and that soon,
 for we are come to great misery;
 help us, O God of our salvation, 9
 for the glory of Thy name,
 O deliver us and be merciful unto our sins,
 for Thy name's sake!
 wherefore should the heathen say: 'where is now their God?' 10
 O let the vengeance of Thy servants' blood that is shed 11
 be openly shewed upon the heathen in our sight!

III. *and promiseth thankfulness.*

O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee, 12
 according to the greatness of Thy power preserve Thou those
 that are appointed to die;
 and for the blasphemy wherewith our neighbours have blas- 13
 phemed Thee
 reward Thou them, O Lord, sevenfold into their bosom!
 so we that are Thy people and sheep of Thy pasture 14
 shall give Thee thanks for ever,
 and will alway be shewing forth Thy praise from generation to
 generation!

Ver. 10. The verse is quoted from Joel ii. 17.

Ver. 12. *prisoners*, i. e. the whole nation.

§ 122. PSALM LXXX.

A SUSTAINED and pathetic appeal to the mercy of God, in strong contrast to the preceding Psalm. The tone of imprecation common to the period appears only in one parenthetical clause¹, while the rest of the Psalm is taken up with a recital of God's fostering care in translating His people from Egypt to Palestine and tending them, as a husbandman his tender vine. This figure of the vine was engraven on the memory of the nation by the touching and exquisite imagery of the Prophets².

I. *An appeal to God,*

Hear, O Thou shepherd of Israel! 1
 Thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,
 Thou that sittest between the Cherubim, shine forth!
 before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses 2
 stir up Thy strength
 and come and help us!
Turn us again, O God, 3
shew the light of Thy countenance and we shall be whole!

II. *who was grievously afflicting Israel,*

O Jehovah, God of Hosts, 4
 how long wilt Thou be angry with Thy people that prayeth?

Vv. 1, 2. *Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasses.* The division into tribes had long ceased and Sion could now boast of including the whole of Israel. These names therefore stand here merely for old and famous portions of the nation. At the same time the mention of *Joseph* three times, § 81. lxxvii. 15 and note, § 129. lxxxi. 5, and here, can hardly be accidental; the presence of representatives from the dwellers in the northern tribes at this dedication may probably be inferred. Cp. § 114. lxviii. 27. *Cherubim.* Cp. § 69. xxii. 3 and note.

Ver. 2. *before Ephraim.* In the order of the ancient march the rear of the Ark was guarded by the warrior tribes of *Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh*, the brother and sons of Joseph. Numbers ii. 18—22.

Vv. 3, 7, 19. *Turn us again.* This burden is sung by the whole congregation.

¹ v. 16.² Jer. ii.; Is. v.; Ezek. xv, xvii.

Thou feedest them with the bread of tears, 5
 and givest them plenteousness of tears to drink;
 Thou hast made us a very strife unto our neighbours, 6
 and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
Turn us again, Thou God of Hosts, 7
shew the light of Thy countenance and we shall be whole.

III. *while He had dealt lovingly with their forefathers.*

Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt, 8
 Thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it;
 Thou madest room for it, 9
 and when it had taken root, it filled the land;
 the hills were covered with the shadow of it, 10
 and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar trees;
 she stretched out her branches unto the sea, 11
 and her boughs unto the river:
 Why hast Thou then broken down her hedge, 12
 that all they that go by pluck off her grapes?
 the wild boar out of the wood doth root it up, 13
 and the wild beasts of the field devour it.
 Turn Thee again, Thou God of Hosts, 14
 look down from heaven, behold
 and visit this vine!
 forasmuch as the vine that Thy right hand hath planted, 15
 and the branch that Thou madest so strong for Thyself
 is burnt with fire and cut down, 16
 —let them perish at the rebuke of Thy countenance!—
 so let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, 17
 and upon the son of man whom Thou madest so strong
 for Thyself!

Ver. 11. *sea—river.* To the Mediterranean Sea on the West, and to the Euphrates on the East. This expression, here and § 124. lxxxix. 26, is taken from § 63. lxxii. 8.

Ver. 17. *let Thy hand be upon the man.* By the *man* is here meant the congregation of Israel, spoken of as *this vine* in ver. 14, and as *us* in ver. 19. God's hand is to be upon them to protect and deliver them.

and so will we not go back from Thee :

18

O let us live and we shall call upon Thy name !

Turn us again, Jehovah, God of Hosts,

shew the light of Thy countenance and we shall be whole !

§ 123. PSALM CXXXII.

THE Psalmist, filled with the memory of many an ancient oracle¹ in praise of David and his city Sion, unable to bear the thought that this ‘beauty of all the earth²,’ for which David had toiled³, should remain sunk in misery and ruin, offers a prayer to God to remember His promises and to return once more to His chosen dwelling-place. Himself a prince⁴ of the house of David,—may-be, the great prince of the house of Judah⁵, Zerubbabel, ‘whose spirit God had stirred to go up to build the house of the Lord,’—or one of his descendants, whose name does not appear in history—the Psalmist sees in the successful rebuilding of the Temple and the re-establishment⁶ of the national worship an assurance of the renewal of God’s favour to the holy resting-place⁷, with which the voice of prophecy had so indissolubly linked the destiny of his house.

I. *God’s promise to David is now fulfilled by the joyous call from North to South to visit the Temple,*

O Jehovah ! remember David 1

and all his trouble ;

how he sware unto Jehovah, 2

and vowed a vow unto the Almighty God of Jacob :

‘I will not come within the tabernacle of mine house, 3

‘nor climb up into my bed,

‘I will not suffer mine eyes to sleep, 4

‘nor mine eyelids to slumber,

Ver. 1. *trouble, i.e. anxious care to build a Temple.* Cp. 2 Sam. vii.

¹ 2 Sam. vii.

⁵ Ezra i. 5.

² Cp. § 36. xlviii. 2.

⁶ 2v. 9, 16.

³ v. 1.

⁷ 2. 14.

⁴ v. 10.

‘until I find out a place for the Temple of Jehovah, 5
 ‘an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob!’
 and lo! we heard this saying at Ephrata, 6
 we found it in the fields of the forest;
 ‘let us go into His tabernacle, 7
 ‘and fall low on our knees before His footstool!’

II. *which the Psalmist prayeth Jehovah to visit once again;*

Arise, Jehovah, into Thy resting-place, 8
 Thou and the ark of Thy strength!
 let Thy priests be clothed with righteousness, 9
 and let Thy saints shout for joy!
 for Thy servant David’s sake, 10
 turn not away the face of Thine Anointed!
 Jehovah hath made a faithful oath unto David, 11
 and He shall not shrink from it:
 of the fruit of thy body
 shall I set upon thy seat!
 if thy children will keep My covenant 12
 and My testimonies that I shall teach them,
 their children also shall sit
 upon thy seat for evermore.

Ver. 6. *this saying*, i.e. the summons (ver. 7) to go into His tabernacle. *Ephrata*, the older and more solemn name for Bethlehem, here signifies the South, as the *forest*—Libanon, the great forest of Canaan—signifies the North. So the whole connection is, ‘David’s vow (vv. 2—5) was not in vain; for we, his people, heard from North to South and obeyed the joyous invitation to come to the Temple at Sion.’ The name *Ephrata* is united with Bethlehem, Micah v. 2. It is probably here mentioned from its connection with David. *Libanon* called here, as in Is. xxii. 8, xxix. 17, simply the forest.

Ver. 8. *ark of Thy strength*, i.e. as the pledge of the manifestation of Divine power (1 Sam. iv. 3), cp. § 128. lxxviii. 62, note. So § 10. cx. 7, ‘rod of Thy strength’ or ‘sceptre of power.’

Vv. 8—10 occur again 2 Chron. vi. 41, 42.

Ver. 9. *righteousness*, i.e. the results of righteousness or blessing. Cp. § 4. xxiv. 5.

Ver. 10. *turn not away*, i.e. reject not the prayer of the prince, Thy servant, who addresseth Thee: as explained in 2 Chron. vi. 42, ‘Lord God, turn not away the face of Thine anointed; remember the mercies of David Thy servant.’ Here the expression ‘turn not away the face’ is made clear by its contrast with ‘remember.’ Cp. also marginal reference to 1 Kings ii. 16.

Ver. 12. *testimonies*. See Glossary.

III. *for Sion is the seat of Jehovah, where David's seed shall never cease to reign.*

For Jehovah hath chosen Sion for Himself,	13
He hath longed for her as His habitation ;	
this shall be My rest for ever,	14
here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein ;	
I will bless her victuals with increase,	15
and satisfy her poor with bread ;	
I will deck her priests with health,	16
and her saints shall rejoice and sing ;	
there will I make the horn of David to flourish,	17
I will ordain a lantern for Mine Anointed ;	
as for his enemies, I will clothe them with shame,	18
but upon himself shall his crown flourish !	

Ver. 16. *health*, *i.e.* the divine blessing.

Ver. 17. *horn*, cp. Ezek. xxix. 21, 'In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth.'

For the *lantern*, or lamp, or candle, *i.e.* the light, of Israel, cp. 1 Kings xi. 36, xv. 4, 2 Sam. xxi. 17, cp. also § 12. xviii. 28 and note.

§ 124. PSALM LXXXIX.

THE great¹ oracular promise to David and to Sion, which dictated the preceding Psalm, inspires the main² or historical portion of this Psalm also, and in many verses reappears³ almost word for word. The time of its composition was one of more than ordinary trouble, even in that troublous age. The⁴ prince of the house of David seeks refuge amid the raging storm by clinging⁵ to Jehovah, the especial protector of David's race, and appeals to His mercy by recounting⁶ the promise, which He had given by the mouth of His Prophets, that His protection should be continued to the house of David for ever.

¹ 2 Sam. vii.

² vv. 20—36.

³ Cp. vv. 23, 27, 30, 31—33, 34 with 2 Sam. vii. 10—16.

⁴ vv. 37—44 and v. 50.

⁵ vv. 1—19.

⁶ vv. 20—36.

The last¹ division of the Psalm falls into language of bitterness and despair,—short, broken utterances, almost sobs; such was the misery of the time, such was the personal ill treatment to which the Prince had been subject. It is remarkable how in the picture here given, the misery of the prince, the Anointed of Jehovah, is mixed up and blended with that of the city and nation. The two were in fact connected by an indissoluble² bond. It is no wonder then that the language passes by an easy and almost imperceptible transition from the one to the other; the weal and woe of Sion's prince are spoken of as identical with the weal and woe of Sion herself.

1. *From the misery of the time the Psalmist takes refuge in God's promises to David,*

My song shall be alway of the lovingkindness of Jehovah, 1
with my mouth will I ever be shewing Thy truth from one
generation to another,

for I have said, 'mercy shall be set up for ever, 2
'Thy truth shalt Thou stablish in the heavens!'

I have made a covenant with My Chosen, 3

I have sworn unto David My servant;
thy seed will I stablish for ever, 4

and set up thy throne from one generation to another!
O Jehovah! the very heavens shall praise Thy wondrous works, 5
and Thy truth in the congregation of the holy ones.

and in His past mercies to Israel.

For who is he among the clouds that shall be compared unto 6
Jehovah?

and what is he among the sons of God that shall be 7
likened to Jehovah?

Ver. 2. *truth.* See Glossary.

Vv. 3, 4. These words contain the promise alluded to in the word *truth* in ver. 2.

Ver. 5. *holy ones, i. e.* sons of God, or celestial Beings spoken of in Scripture as forming the court of God in heaven, cp. Job i. 6, v. 1, xv. 15, xxxviii. 7.

Ver. 7. *sons of God, i. e.* angels, § 7. xxix. 1, notes.

¹ vv. 37—50.

² Cp. § 63. lxxii. note, ad finem.

God is greatly to be feared in the council of the holy ones, 8
and to be had in reverence above all them that are round
about Him.

O Jehovah, God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto 9
Thee, O Jehovah?

whose faithfulness is like Thy faithfulness, of all them that
are round about Thee?

Thou rulest the raging of the sea, 10

Thou stillest the waves thereof when they arise ;

Thou smotest Rahab like unto one that is slain, 11

Thou hast scattered Thine enemies abroad with Thy mighty
arm ;

the heavens are Thine, the earth also is Thine, 12

Thou hast laid the foundations of the round world and all
that therein is ;

Thou hast made the north and the south ; 13

Tabor and Hermon rejoice in Thy name ;

Thou hast a mighty arm, 14

strong is Thy hand and high is Thy right hand :

righteousness and equity are the foundation of Thy seat, 15

mercy and truth go before Thy face :

blessed is the people, O Jehovah, that knoweth the joyful sound, 16

that walketh in the light of Thy countenance ;

Their delight is daily in Thy name, 17

and in Thy righteousness do they make their boast ;

for Thou art the glory of their strength, 18

and in Thy lovingkindness Thou shalt lift up our horns,

for our shield is from Jehovah, 19

from the Holy One of Israel is our king.

Ver. 9. *of all them—round about Thee.* The Pr. Bk. omits the words 'of all them' and takes it as the faithfulness with which God is clad, as with a garment.

Ver. 11. *Rahab*, 'the proud one,' *i. e.* Egypt. Cp. § 99. lxxxvii. 4, and note.

Ver. 13. *Tabor and Hermon*; the most striking natural features of Palestine.

Ver. 16. *the joyful sound*, *i. e.* the sound of the trumpet at Thy festivals: cp. Lev. xxiii.

24, Num. x. 10.

Ver. 18. *horns.* Cp. § 38. lxxv. 3, note.

Ver. 19. *king*, *i. e.* our King is appointed by God.

II. *How God chose David to be His king and promised dominion to his seed,*

Thou spakest sometime in visions to Thy holy one, 20
 and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty,
 I have exalted one chosen out of the people,
 I have found David My servant, 21
 with my holy oil have I anointed him,
 My hand shall hold him fast, 22
 and My arm shall strengthen him,
 the enemy shall not be able to do him violence, 23
 the son of wickedness shall not hurt him,
 I will smite down his foes before his face, 24
 and plague them that hate him,
 My truth also and My mercy shall be with him, 25
 and in My name shall his horn be exalted;
 I will set his dominion also over the sea, 26
 and his right hand over the floods;
 he shall call Me; 'Thou art my father, 27
 my God and the rock of my salvation!'
 and I will make him My firstborn, 28
 higher than the kings of the earth;
 My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, 29
 and My covenant shall stand fast with him;
 his seed also will I make to endure for ever, 30
 and his throne as the days of heaven:
 but if his children forsake My law, 31
 and walk not in My judgments,

Ver. 20. *Thy holy one, i.e.* Nathan, the holy one of Jehovah, cp. 1 Chron. xvii. 15, 2 Sam. vii. 17.

Ver. 23. *shall not be able to do him violence, i.e.* as a creditor to a debtor who cannot pay his debt. This is an allusion to the state of debt and distress in which the Jews at this time were sunk.

Vv. 27, 31—33. Cp. 2 Sam. vii. 14, where the promise here applied to David is applied to Solomon. Cp. § 16. ii. *History*.

if they break My statutes 32
 and keep not My commandments,
 I will visit their offences with the rod,
 and their sin with scourges;
 nevertheless My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him,
 nor suffer My truth to fail; [33
 My covenant will I not break, 34
 nor alter the thing that is gone out of My lips;
 I have sworn once by My holiness,
 —I will not fail David!—
 his seed shall endure for ever, 35
 and his throne is like as the sun before Me;
 it shall stand fast for evermore as the moon, 36
 and as the faithful witness in heaven.

III. and yet hath He plunged that seed into hopeless misery.

But Thou hast abhorred and forsaken, 37
 Thou hast been wroth with Thine Anointed,
 Thou hast broken the covenant of Thy servant, 38
 and cast his crown to the ground,
 Thou hast overthrown all his hedges, 39
 and broken down his strong holds;
 all they that go by spoil him, 40
 and he is become a reproach to his neighbours;
 Thou hast set up the right hand of his enemies, 41
 and made all his adversaries to rejoice;
 Thou hast taken away the edge of his sword, 42
 and givest him not victory in the battle;

Ver. 34. *once*, i. e. once for all; said of the unchangeableness of divine things, as opposed to the mutability of things human. 1 Peter iii. 18, Jude 3. *fail*, i. e. in my promise to David.

Ver. 36. *stand fast*, i. e. as sure as the day follows the night. *witness*, i. e. God's covenant with sun and moon. Cp. Jer. xxxiii. 20, 21, 'Thus saith the Lord; If ye can break My covenant of the day and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne.' Cp. also Jer. xxxi. 35—37.

Thou hast put out his glory,	43
and cast his throne down to the ground;	
the days of his youth hast Thou shortened,	44
and covered him with dishonour!	
Jehovah! how long wilt Thou hide Thyself—for ever?	45
and shall Thy wrath burn like fire?	
Oh, remember how short my time is,	46
and how Thou hast made all men for nought!	
what man is he that liveth and shall not see death,	47
and shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?	
Lord, where are Thy old lovingkindnesses,	48
which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?	
remember, Lord, the rebuke that Thy servants have,	49
—and how I do bear in my bosom many peoples—	
wherewith Thine enemies blaspheme Thee, O Jehovah,	50
and slander the footsteps of Thine Anointed.	

Ver. 49. *bear in my bosom many peoples.* The anointed prince speaks of uniting in his own bosom as in that of his nation all the peoples of the earth, *i. e.* Israel is to convert the heathen.

Ver. 50 *Thine Anointed.* After these words comes a sentence in the Prayer-Book Version; ‘Praised be Jehovah for evermore. Amen and Amen.’ This is a doxology appended by an editor to a smaller collection of the Psalms, and does not belong to the Psalm itself. See Appendix A.

§ 125. PSALM LX.

THIS Psalm expresses the feeling of the time, when the cry of Israel to God was ever that He would set them up again and turn their captivity indeed, by ending the disappointment which had followed on the restoration. After repeating the oracular¹ words in which Nathan had depicted the glories of David’s empire, the Psalmist cries with plaintive tenderness ‘Who shall lead *me* into the strong city? who shall bring *me* into Edom?’ to destroy that Edom, which had helped Nebuchadnezzar² to destroy the holy city, and had lately joined in the great confederacy against Nehemiah³.

¹ *vv.* 6—9.

² § 100, Introduction.

³ § 127. lxxxvii. 6.

I. *The Psalmist of the Return in his own affliction,*

O God, Thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad; 1
 Thou hast been displeased; O stablish us again!
 Thou hast made the earth to tremble and rent it asunder; 2
 heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh!
 Thou hast shewn Thy people heavy things; 3
 Thou hast given us a drink of bewildering wine,
 Thou hast given a banner to such as fear Thee, 4
 —only that they should flee before the bow of their enemies!
 Oh, that Thy beloved may be delivered, 5
 help with Thy right hand and hear us!

II. *quoteth an oracle, which had comforted David in his trouble,*

God spake in His sanctuary,—let me rejoice thereat,— 6
 I will divide Shechem,
 and mete out the balley of Succoth!
 Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine. 7
 Ephraim also is the defence of My head,
 Judah is My sceptre!
 As for Moab, it is My washpot, 8
 upon Edom will I cast out My shoe:
 wail aloud because of Me, Philistia!

III. *as an assurance to his countrymen that God would deliver them from their affliction.*

Who will lead me to a strong city? 9
 who will bring me into Edom?
 Is it not Thou, O God, who hast cast us off, 10
 and goest not forth, O God, with our hosts?

Ver. 4. *banner—flee.* The original is a play upon words, 'A flag not to conquer, but to flag before our enemies.'

Vv. 6—8. See notes on these verses in § 11.

Ver. 10. How much of the introduction and conclusion in the Psalm, as it stands at present, is from the hand of David, it is impossible to say. What may have been the general character of both may be gathered generally from the 3rd and 4th Psalms, which were composed by David under similar circumstances; but the whole Psalm in its present form belongs to the class which looks back from the troublous times of the restoration with longing hope that the glorious time of David may return.

Give us help against the oppressor, 11
 for vain is the help of man!
 through God we shall gain the victory, 12
 and He shall tread down our enemies!

§ 126. PSALM LXXXV.

THIS Psalm is designed in antiphonal¹ form for the Temple service, and reveals to us a picture of the long continued sufferings and depression of the people even after their restoration to their beloved city². Appealing to God by this greatest of all His mercies³, they implore Him to complete His work, to establish the restored Jerusalem and to rescue them from their humble and fallen state.

In the second part the priest comforts them with the glorious vision vouchsafed to him of the time when they would see the re-establishment of God's glory in His land⁴.

The Psalm was apparently composed during the interval between the disappearance of Zerubbabel and the advent of Ezra, when the returned exiles were harassed by a series of attacks from the Samaritans and other neighbouring nations, like those from which they afterwards suffered in the time of Nehemiah⁵.

The People

offer thanksgiving for restoration to the holy land.

O Jehovah, Thou art become gracious unto Thy land, 1
 Thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob;
 Thou hast forgiven the offence of Thy people, 2
 and hast covered all their sins;
 Thou hast taken away all Thy displeasure, 3
 and turned Thyself from Thy wrathful indignation:

Ver. 1. *brought back our captivity, i. e. the captives.*

¹ Cp. § 21. xx.

² v. 1.
⁵ Cp. § 127, Introduction.

³ vv. 1, 2, 3.

⁴ v. 12.

stablish us, O God of our salvation, 4
 and let Thine anger cease from us!
 wilt Thou be displeased at us for ever, 5
 and wilt Thou stretch out Thy wrath from one generation
 to another?
 wilt Thou not turn again and quicken us, 6
 that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?
 shew us Thy mercy, O Jehovah, 7
 and grant us Thy salvation!

The Priest

revealeth to them his vision, warning them that its fulfilment is conditional.

I will hearken what Jehovah our God will say; 8
 for He shall speak peace unto His people and to His saints,
 —but let them not turn again to folly!—
 ‘surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him, 9
 ‘that glory may dwell in our land!
 ‘mercy and truth are met together, 10
 ‘righteousness and peace have kissed each other:
 ‘truth shall spring up out of the earth, 11
 ‘and righteousness shall look down from heaven:
 ‘yea, Jehovah shall give His blessing, 12
 ‘and our land shall give her increase;

Ver. 4. *stablish us*, cp. ‘turn our captivity,’ as § 93. cxxvi. 5, ‘turn us again,’ § 122. lxxx. 3, *i. e.* restore us fully.

Ver. 6. *quicken, i. e.* give us life. See Glossary.

Ver. 8. *I will hearken.* Cp. the similar introduction to the utterance of prophetic words, Hab. ii. 1, 2, ‘I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, . . . and Jehovah answered me, and said, &c.’

Ver. 9. *salvation—land, i. e.* the approaching deliverance will bring glory, and so the fulfilment of the hopes of the contemporary Haggai (ii. 7, 8, 9), ‘I will fill this house with *glory*, saith the Lord of Hosts. The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.’

righteousness shall go before Him, 13
 ‘and shall follow in the paths of His footsteps.’

Ver. 13. *righteousness*. The beautiful figures in which the descriptions of the future kingdom are clothed were no mere metaphor to men whose whole subsistence was at the mercy of an eastern climate, and who were at this time more than usually exposed to the attacks of their Bedouin neighbours.

For an illustration of the metaphor, which expresses the joy of the material world as the *righteousness* of its inhabitants, when their fidelity should no longer fail of its appropriate reward, cp. Hosea ii. 19, where under the figure of the presents of the bridegroom to his love, (*i.e.* of God's promised blessing to His faithful people,) their fidelity is made a condition of the return of rainfall. ‘I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness. . . and I will answer to the heavens, and they shall answer to the earth, and the earth shall answer to the corn and the wine and the oil, and they shall answer to Jezreel’ (*i.e.* to the sowing of God). Hosea ii. 20, 21, 22.

§ 127. PSALM LXXXIII.

THE description of the confederation of the heathen tribes in this Psalm carries us at once to the time ‘when Sanballat¹ and the army of the Samaritans, Tobiah the Ammonite with Geshem the Arabian and the Ashdodites’ in their wrath at the news, that under the vigorous administration of Nehemiah, ‘the walls of Jerusalem were rising up again, and the breaches were beginning to be stopped²,’ conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem and hinder it³.

The Jews however seemed to have had intelligence of the ‘crafty counsels’ of the confederacy; and though their adversaries had boasted ‘that they should not hear nor see till they came in the midst of them and slew them and caused their work to cease⁴,’ yet God ‘brought their counsel to nought⁵’—for Nehemiah appealed to the people in words as stirring as the Psalm—‘to fear them not, but to remember the Lord which is great and terrible, and to fight for their brethren, their sons and their daughters, their wives and their houses⁶.’

After the first danger was over, the people returned to their work and—‘as they laboured half of them at the work and half of them holding the spears, from the rising of the morning till the stars

¹ Neh. iv. 7.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.* 4.

⁴ Neh. iv. 11.

⁵ Neh. iv. 15.

⁶ Neh. iv. 14. Cp. Numb. xiv. 9; 2 Sam. x. 12.

appeared¹, and were expecting every moment to hear the sound of the trumpet, the old battle-cries of Deborah and of Gideon were ever on their lips, and the words of this Psalm may often have pealed forth from the workers on the wall.

The spirit-stirring words² of the 2nd Psalm, by which a young king's arm had been nerved to victory over a similar 'gathering together of the heathen,' were hovering before the Psalmist's mind. He feels that Israel is no longer now without a leader, as they were during the fifty years between the close of Zerubbabel's rule and the return of Ezra, in which their history had sunk into oblivion. They have in Nehemiah a chieftain who is no unworthy successor of Gideon or of Deborah. The deep devotion to his country, which had led him to leave a high position at the Court of Artaxerxes, was not without its fruits; for it was through his vigorous efforts in rebuilding the walls that the city was enabled to raise its head once more. Indeed his achievements had a far more permanent effect than even the glorious victories of the older time.

The heads of the confederate tribes soon became aware of the greatness of the leader with whom they had to deal,—the only man who had at once the spirit to awaken the old fire of national enthusiasm, and the power both to heal dissensions within and to repel attacks from without—and they directed all their efforts to his destruction. Though they were disappointed in their treacherous attempts to murder him at a conference, yet eventually, by misrepresenting his policy, they succeeded in at least temporarily undermining his power at the Persian court³. Although there was no sudden overthrow of the confederates as of the five kings at Beth-horon, yet they were more effectually foiled by the restoration of Jerusalem than they would have been by the most signal defeat in the field.

I. *Prayer for protection*

Hold not Thy tongue, O God,

I

keep not still silence, refrain not Thyself, O God!

¹ Neh. iv. 21. Cp. Exod. xiv. 14, 25; Deut. i. 30; iii. 22; xx. 4; Josh. xxiii. 10.

² § 16. ii. xv. 2, 3, 5.

³ vi. 8, note. Cp. Introduction to §§ 119—126.

for lo, Thine enemies rage together, 2
 and they that hate Thee have lift up their head;
 they have imagined craftily against Thy people, 3
 and have taken counsel against Thy beloved;
 they have said, 'come, let us root them out that they be no 4
 more a people,
 'and that the name of Israel may be no more in remem-
 brance.'

II. *against the conspiracy of the heathen,*

For they have cast their heads together with one consent, 5
 and are confederate against Thee—
 the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, 6
 of Moab and the Hagarenes,
 Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, 7
 the Philistines with them that dwell at Tyre;
 Assyria also is joined with them, 8
 and hath holpen the children of Lot.

III. *that, as the enemies of old,*

But do Thou to them as unto the Midianites, 9
 unto Sisera and unto Jabin at the brook of Kison,
 who perished at Endor, 10
 and became as dung for the earth;

Ver. 2. *rage together.* Cp. § 16. ii. 1.

Ver. 3. *beloved*, literally 'hidden ones,' *i.e.* hidden under the shadow of Thy wings, cp. § 62. xxxvii. 7, § 57. xxxi. 22.

Ver. 6. *Ishmaelites*, *i.e.* the Arabians, cp. Neh. iv. 7, vi. 1, *Hagarenes* (the children of Hagar), and *Gebal*, the once terrible tribe of *Amalek*, were all tribes lying south of the Dead Sea.

Ver. 7. *Philistines—Tyre.* These two are coupled together as being both of Phœnician origin.

Ver. 8. *Assyria*, or Assur, the old name of the Empire of the North, means Persia. Ezra vi. 22. For the hostility of Sanballat the Persian satrap. cp. Neh. iv. 1. The king had perhaps been led to suspect that Nehemiah might aim at setting himself up as an independent prince on the completion of the walls. *children of Lot*, *i.e.* Moab and Ammon.

Ver. 9. *Midianites*, for the victory of Gideon, cp. Judg. vi, vii.

Vv. 9, 10. For *Sisera*, cp. Judg. iv, v. See Supplement, § 156, 'The Song of Deborah.' The name of *Endor* is not mentioned there; perhaps the Psalmist is quoting from a lost chronicle.

make them and their princes like Oreb and Zeeb, 11
 yea, make all their kings like as Zebah and Salmunna,
 who said; 'let us take to ourselves 12
 'the habitations of God in possession.'

IV. *so they too may perish.*

O my God, make them like unto the chaff, 13
 and as the stubble before the wind,
 like as the fire that burneth up the wood, 14
 and as the flame that consumeth the mountains;
 persecute them even so with Thy tempest, 15
 and make them afraid with Thy storm,
 fill their faces with shame, 16
 that they may seek Thy name, O Jehovah!
 let them be confounded and troubled for ever, 17
 let them be put to shame and perish,
 and they shall know that Thou, whose name is JEHOVAH, 18
 art only the most Highest over all the earth.

Ver. 11. *Oreb and Zeeb*, cp. Judg. vii. 25. *Zebah and Salmunna*, cp. Judg. viii. 5—10, 18—21.

Ver. 13. *chaff*, cp. Is. xvii. 13, 'They shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.'

Ver. 14. *flames—consumeth*, cp. Deut. xxxii. 22.

§ 128. PSALM LXXVIII.

THIS is one of the great didactic Psalms of the Jewish nation. The prophets of the Captivity were never weary of reminding their countrymen that the promises of God were not absolute, inalienable gifts, the hereditary possession of a particular line, but that they were blessings attaching only to those who willingly co-operate with God in His moral government of the world¹. It is with feelings such as these that the Psalmist appeals to history as the rich source of hope, warn-

¹ Cp. Is. xxvii. 11; Jer. xxvi. 1—6; Ezek. xviii, xix, xxii, xxiv, &c.

ing and encouragement in the darkness which was continually threatening to envelope the nation. Bent on justifying the ways of God to man, he regards the whole history from this one point of view. He shews that God's ways are not unequal, but that the laws of His Providence are eternal, and that He dispenses the blessings of Gerizim and the curses of Ebal¹ to His servants according as they obey or disobey His commandments; that as at one time the passage of the Red Sea, so at another the 'graves of lust²,' are the marks of God's dealings with His people. He shews how within the nation itself the first of the tribes had become last and the last first according to the changes of their character. The most remarkable example of this law, the most striking instance of great opportunities misused, was to be found in the varying fate of the tribe of Ephraim, at first the possessor of the national sanctuary of Shiloh, the ruling tribe of the confederacy during the whole era of Joshua and the Judges; but afterwards falling away to the heathen worship around them, losing sight of their mission, and letting the Ark—the testimony of God's covenant and the very symbol of the national existence—fall into the hands of the Philistine. History completes the lesson, and shews how the northern tribes, when deservedly dethroned from their supremacy, would fain have regained their position at the price of apostasy³; how under the rule of a succession of half-heathen kings they finally lost all sense of their high calling and became fused into the mass of nations which they had been intended to purify; finally, how they became content with this degrading amalgamation, and how, when the more faithful part of the nation gladly seized the opportunity of return, the northern tribes had already lost even the desire to re-establish themselves in the home of their ancestors.

If we are to seek for the special occasion of a Psalm, the burden of which was continually in the mouths of the Prophets⁴, we may find it in the culminating point of the antagonism between the North and the South, when the Samaritans headed the heathen confederacy, which impeded the restoration in the time of Nehemiah⁵.

¹ Deut. xi. 29.

² 1 Kings xii. 28; 2 Kings xvi. 5.

⁴ Hos. iv. 15—17; Amos ii, vii; Is. xxviii.

² *vv.* 28—30, and note.

⁵ § 127, Introduction, Neh. iv. 2.

I. *The Psalmist calleth the people to listen to the lessons of their past history.*

Hearken unto my teaching, O my people,	1
incline your ears to the words of my mouth ;	
I will open my mouth in a parable,	2
I will declare the dark things of old !	
the things which we have heard and known,	3
and such as our fathers have told us—	
we will not hide them from their children,	4
but shew to the generation to come the honour of Jehovah,	
His might and His wonderful works that He hath done :	
for He established a statute in Jacob,	5
and gave Israel a law,	
which he commanded our forefathers	
to teach their children,	
that their posterity might know it,	6
and the children which were yet unborn,	
that when they came up they might shew their children	7
the same ;	
that they might put their trust in God,	8
and not to forget the works of God,	
but to keep His commandments,	
and not be as their forefathers,	9
a faithless and stubborn generation,	
a generation that set not their heart aright,	
and whose spirit cleaveth not steadfastly unto God.	

II.

Like as the children of Ephraim who being harnessed and
 carrying bows
 turned themselves back in the day of battle,

Ver. 1. *my teaching—parable*, these words mark the didactic character of the Psalm. The Psalmist addresses the people as a prophet, or teacher. *dark things*, *i. e.* the riddle of their past history—why God at one time supported and at another rejected them.

Ver. 10. *who being harnessed and carrying bows*, *i. e.* who though armed with bows and having the power to cast out the heathen failed to do so during their ascendancy. Ephraim is compared to the bow that fails at the moment of need, cp. Hosea vii. 16.

they kept not the covenant of God, 11
 and would not walk in His law,
 but forgot what He had done, 12
 and the wonderful works that He had shewed for them:
 marvellous things did He in the sight of their forefathers, 13
 in the land of Egypt even in the field of Zoan;
 He divided the sea and let them go through, 14
 He made the waters to stand on an heap;
 in the daytime also He led them with a cloud, 15
 and all the night through with a light of fire;
 He clave the hard rocks in the wilderness, 16
 and gave them drink thereof as it had been out of the
 great depths;
 He brought water out of the stony rock, 17
 so that it gushed out like the rivers.

III.

Yet for all this they sinned yet more against Him, 18
 and provoked the most Highest in the wilderness;
 they tempted God in their hearts, 19
 and required meat for their lust;

Ver. 13. *the field of Zoan*, i. e. the country round the ancient city of Tanis, the abode of the shepherd kings. Though Zoan is not mentioned in Exodus, it is supposed to have been the abode of the Israelites in their bondage.

Ver. 14. *He—heap*. A quotation from the song of Miriam, Ex. xv. 8, 'With the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as a heap.' See § 155 in Supplement.

Ver. 15. For the smoke-like *cloud*, alternating with *fire*, as the beacon on their march, cp. Exod. xiii. 21, 22. A remarkable passage in Curtius, v. 2, 7, describing Alexander's army on the march, mentions a beacon hoisted on a pole from the head-quarters as a signal for marching; 'observabatur ignis noctu, fumus interdiu.' This was probably adopted from an Eastern custom. Similarly the Persians used as a conspicuous signal, an image of the sun enclosed in crystal (Curtius, iii. 3, 9). 'Caravans are still known to use such beacons of fire and smoke, the cloudlessness and often stillness of the sky giving the smoke great density of volume, and boldness of outline.' *Bib. Dic.* on 'pillar of cloud.'

Vv. 16, 17. For the murmuring at Rephidim, and the *water from the rock* of Horeb, cp. Exod. xvii. 1-6. Part of ver. 17 is a quotation from Numb. xx. 8, which contains an account of the similar gift at Kadesh.

Ver. 19. *for their lust*, i. e. out of mere lust, cp. Numb. xi. 4, 5, 'And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting, and the children of Israel also wept again and said, 'Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish which we did eat in Egypt.''

they spake against God also, saying, 20
 'shall God prepare a table in the wilderness?
 'He smote the stony rock indeed that the water gushed out, 21
 'and the streams flowed withal,
 'but can He give bread also,
 'or provide flesh for His people?'
 when Jehovah heard this He was wroth, 22
 so that the fire was kindled against Jacob,
 and there came up heavy displeasure against Israel,
 because they believed not in God, 23
 and put not their trust in His help:
 so He commanded the clouds above, 24
 and opened the doors of heaven;
 He rained down manna also upon them for to eat, 25
 and gave them the bread of heaven.

IV.

So they did all eat angels' food, 26
 He sent them food enough;
 He caused the east wind to blow under heaven, 27
 and through His power He brought in the south wind;
 He rained flesh upon them as thick as dust, 28
 and feathered fowl like as the sand of the sea;
 He let it fall among their tents, 29
 even round about His habitations;

Ver. 20. *prepare a table*, cp. § 25. xxiii. 5, 'Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me, Thou hast anointed my head with oil (as for a feast) and my cup shall be full.'

Ver. 24. The Psalmist passes to the description of the gift and does not return to the punishment till ver. 31.

Ver. 26. *they*, *i. e.* every man. Cp. Exod. xvi. 16, 'Gather it every man according to his calling, an omer for every man.'

angels' food, *i. e.* the bread of the strong or mighty ones, *i. e.* the bread of Heaven, ver. 25. § 144. cv. 39. Cp. Wisd. xvi. 20.

Ver. 27. *under heaven*, *i. e.* from heaven, or *through His power*, as the next line has it.

Ver. 28. *flesh*, the quails that were given in wrath at the fatal Kibroth-hattaavah, or 'the graves of lust,' cp. Numb. xi. 31—35.

Ver. 29. *His habitations*, *i. e.* the land of the chosen people.

so they did eat and were well filled, 30
 for He gave them their desire;
 they were not estranged from their lust;
 but while the meat was yet in their mouths, 31
 the heavy wrath of God came upon them,
 and slew the fattest of them,
 yea, and smote down the chosen men that were in Israel.

V.

But for all this they sinned yet more, 32
 and believed not His wondrous works;
 therefore their days did He consume in vanity, 33
 and their years in trouble;
 when He slew them, then they sought Him, 34
 and turned them again and enquired after God,
 and they remembered that God was their rock, 35
 and the High God was their redeemer:
 nevertheless they did but flatter Him with their mouth, 36
 and dissembled with Him with their tongue,
 for their heart was not whole with Him, 37
 neither continued they steadfast in His covenant;
 but He is so merciful that He forgave their misdeeds and 38
 destroyed them not,
 —yea, many a time turned He His wrath away, 39
 and would not suffer His whole displeasure to arise;—
 for He considered that they were but flesh, 40
 and that they were even a wind that passeth away and
 cometh not again.

VI.

Many a time did they provoke Him in the wilderness, 41
 and grieved Him in the desert;

Ver. 30. *not estranged*, cp. Numb. xi. 33, 'While the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed.'

Ver. 31. *fattest*, i.e. the hale and strong ones, the hope of the nation. *chosen men*, literally 'the young men.'

Ver. 33. *in vanity*, i.e. He let their days fade away as a breath.

they turned back and tempted God,	42
and moved the Holy One of Israel ;	
they thought not of His hand,	43
and of the day when He delivered them from the hand of the enemy :	
how He had wrought His miracles in Egypt,	44
and His wonders in the field of Zoan ;	
He turned their waters into blood,	45
so that they might not drink of the rivers ;	
He sent flies among them and devoured them up,	46
and frogs to destroy them ;	
He gave their fruit unto the caterpillar,	47
and their labour unto the locust ;	
He destroyed their vines with hailstones,	48
and their mulberry-trees with the frost ;	
He smote their cattle also with hailstones,	49
and their flocks with hot thunderbolts.	

VII.

He cast upon them the furiousness of His wrath,	50
anger, displeasure and trouble,	
an host of destroying angels ;	
He made a way to His indignation,	51
and spared not their soul from death,	
but gave their life over to the pestilence,	
and smote all the firstborn in Egypt,	52
the first-fruits of the mightiest in the dwellings of Ham ;	
but as for His people—He led them forth like sheep,	53
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock ;	

Vv. 45—49 are a parenthesis explaining vv. 43, 44. For the plagues cp. Exod. ix, x.

Ver. 46. *devoured them up*. Cp. Philo's description of the dog-flies of Egypt, 'They rest not till they have satisfied themselves with blood and flesh.'

Ver. 48. For the *vines* of Egypt cp. the butler's dream, Gen. xl. 9.

Ver. 49. *hailstones—thunderbolts*. Cp. Exod. ix. 23, 'The Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground.'

He brought them out safely, that they should not fear, 54
 and overwhelmed their enemies with the sea,
 and brought them within the borders of His sanctuary, 55
 even to His mountain which He purchased with His right
 hand;
 He cast out the nations also before them, 56
 and caused their land to be divided for an heritage,
 and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents.

VIII.

Yet they tempted and displeased the most High God, 57
 and kept not His testimonies,
 but turned their backs and fell away like their forefathers, 58
 starting aside like a broken bow;
 for they grieved Him with their hill-altars, 59
 and provoked Him to displeasure with their images:
 when God heard this He was wroth, 60
 and took sore displeasure at Israel;
 so that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, 61
 even the tent that He had pitched among men,
 and delivered up His power into captivity, 62
 and His glory into the enemy's hand;

Ver. 55. *His mountain, i. e.* the hill of Shiloh, cp. ver. 61 and Exod. xv. 17, 'Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.' The mention of Sion here would be out of place, as the Psalmist is still dealing with the trial of the tribe of Ephraim.

Ver. 57. *testimonies, i. e.* did not obey the warnings by which He testified to them His displeasure.

Vv. 57, 58, 59. Cp. Judg. ii. 12, 13.

Ver. 58. *like a broken bow*, cp. ver. 10 and Hos. vii. 16.

Ver. 61. *Shiloh*, cp. Josh. xviii. 1.

Ver. 62. *His glory, i. e.* the ark. Cp. 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22, 'And she named the child Ichabod, saying, 'the glory is departed from Israel.' because the ark of God was taken,' § 123. cxxxii. 8, 'Thou and the Ark of Thy strength.' The Ark is called 'power,' as the pledge of the manifestation of Divine power (1 Sam. iv. 3), or 'beauty,' or 'ornament,' as the place of the manifestation of His glory.

He gave His people over also unto the sword, 63
 and was wroth with His inheritance;
 the fire consumed their young men, 64
 and their maidens were not given to marriage;
 their priests were slain with the sword, 65
 and their widows made no lamentation.

IX.

Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, 66
 and like a giant refreshed with wine;
 He drove His enemies backward, 67
 and put them to a perpetual shame;
 He refused the tabernacle of Joseph, 68
 and chose not the tribe of Ephraim;
 but chose the tribe of Judah, 69
 even the hill of Sion which He loved;
 and there He built His sanctuary like the heavens on high, 70
 and laid the foundation of it like the earth that He hath
 made fast for ever;
 He chose David also His servant, 71
 and took him away from the sheepfolds;
 as he was following the ewes great with young, He took him, 72
 that he might feed Jacob His people
 and Israel His inheritance;
 so he fed them with a faithful and true heart, 73
 and guided them prudently with all his power.

Ver. 63. *sword*. Cp. 1 Sam. iv. 10, for the great slaughter by the Philistines in which 30,000 Israelites perished.

Ver. 64. *fire*, i. e. of war. For this metaphor cp. Numb. xxi. 26—28.

Ver. 65. The state was so utterly ruined, that there could be no public *lamentation*, cp. Job xxvii. 15, 'This is the portion of the wicked man with God...his widows shall not weep.' Ezek. xxiv. 21, 23, 'And your sons and your daughters whom ye have left shall fall by the sword...and your tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet; ye shall not mourn nor weep.' Cp. the account of the fall of Jehoiakim, Jer. xxii. 18.

§ 129. PSALM LXXXI.

THE enthusiasm with which the services of the New Temple were performed made the Temple hymns the natural vehicle for conveying truths to the minds of the nation. This Psalm seems specially intended for the great festivals of the seventh month, which was ushered in by the feast of Trumpets or the new moon, and which contained not only the great day of Atonement but also the feast of Tabernacles, celebrated at the full moon of the same month, and honoured by the slaughter of victims above any feast in the Jewish year. This feast not only commemorated the dwelling in tents in the wilderness¹, but was also the great harvest thanksgiving of the nation². As was natural at a time when the memory of the second Exodus was fresh in their minds, the Psalmist dwells chiefly on the historical aspect of the feast and the great lessons of their deliverance, with but a cursory allusion³ to the harvest.

I. *A summons to praise God,*

Sing we merrily unto God our strength,	1
make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob ;	
raise the psalm, bring hither the tabret,	2
the merry harp with the lute ;	
blow up the trumpet in the new moon,	3
and in the full moon upon our solemn feast-day :	
for this was made a statute for Israel,	4
and a law of the God of Jacob ;	
this He ordained in Joseph for a law	5
when He came against the land of Egypt,	
what time I heard a strange language.	

Ver. 2. *tabret*, see Glossary.

Ver. 5. *Joseph*, i.e. the 12 tribes, Ephraim then being chief. *against*, i.e. destroying the first-born, cp. Ex. xi. 4. *I*, i.e. Israel. *a strange language*, i.e. a foreign tongue. Cp. § 138. cxiv. 1, where 'a strange people' means foreigners from Egypt.

Vv. 5, 6. For the change from *He* to *I*, cp. § 117. xci. 14, note.

¹ Lev. xxiii. 43.

² Ex. xxiii. 16.

³ v. 17.

II. *who brought Israel out of Egypt,*

I eased his shoulders from the burden, 6
 and his hands were delibered from carrying the bricks.
 Thou calledst unto Me in trouble and I delibered thee, 7
 and heard thee in the darkness of the thunder; 8
 and probed thee also at the waters of strife:
 hear, O My people, and I will testify unto thee, 9
 O Israel, if thou wouldst hearken unto Me!
 there shall no strange god be in thee, 10
 neither shalt thou worship any other god;
 I am Jehovah thy God, 11
 who brought thee out of the land of Egypt,
 open thy mouth and I shall fill it!

III. *and, if the nation had been faithful,*

But My people would not hear My voice, 12
 and Israel would not obey Me;
 so I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts, 13
 and let them follow their own imaginations!
 Oh that My people had hearkened unto Me, 14
 and Israel had walked in My ways!
 I should soon have put down their enemies, 15
 and turned My hand against their adversaries;
 the haters of Jehovah should have submitted themselves to them, 16
 but their time should have endured for ever!

IV. *would never have failed them.*

We should have fed them also with the finest wheat flour, 17
 and with honey out of the stony rock should I have satis-
 fied thee.

Ver. 6. *burden*, literally basket.Ver. 11. *open—fill it*. Referring to the harvest festival, see Introduction.

Vv. 13—17. An epitome of Deut. xxxii.

Ver. 17. *He—I*, a sudden change from the 1st to the 3rd person not uncommon in the Hebrew writings, cp. Isai. xiv. 26.

BOOK V.

CLOSE OF THE PSALTER.

BOOK V.

CLOSE OF THE PSALTER.

AFTER the time of Nehemiah all guidance from the history ceases. We have arrived at a period, towards the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century before the Christian era, when the Prophets, the great expounders and upholders of the spiritual life of the nation, had passed away; no figure is visible but that of the Hierarchy, which, though busy with a ceaseless round of occupation in gathering up and preserving national records and antiquities, marked, not the energy, but the paralysis and extinction of national life. Of books there was no lack, but they were no longer the spirit-stirring records of a time of thought and movement; they were rather, as they have been called in Ecclesiastes¹, itself probably the product of this age of formalism, 'a weariness to the flesh;' we meet with no further attempts to solve the problems, which the ever-changing circumstances of the time suggested; there is no stirring of the breeze in the close and stifling atmosphere which, even in the absence of an irreligious life, was then, as it has been ever since, the characteristic of hierarchical rule.

In this general stagnation there were no longer the lyric outbursts which could inspire a National Psalmody. Hence it is that

¹ Eccles. xii. 12.

in this latter period we find a greater prevalence of the Composite Psalms¹, as of those constructed on the Acrostic or Alphabetical arrangement².

Only within the sanctuary of personal experience does Psalmody retain its ancient grandeur; here it is equal to the old models both in depth of thought and in beauty of expression. The same intensity of religious life, which characterized some Psalms³ of the preceding period, is still found in this⁴; and never did religion burn with a brighter light than now, when stripped of all other protection and consolation than that which itself affords. In these Psalms, which may be called the 'Psalms of personal experience,' the struggle with the world has ceased, and the pious spirit exults in the serene enjoyment of blessings, which the most fiery trials had been powerless to take away. Thus they will ever be quoted with those of the same character from an earlier period—the 23rd and 27th—as the highest expression of spiritual security.

Closely connected with these, indeed immediately springing from them, are the grand Congregational Psalms, with which the Psalter closes⁵. In these there is a fervour and a glow, such as is only found when it burns with equal strength in the heart of each member of the congregation. From this fervency of spirit, as well as from the rich abundance of this group, we see how the little remnant of the new Jerusalem, purified seven times in the fire of affliction, had gained in the possession of these eternal truths an abiding spiritual life, such as no shocks of outward circumstance could take away.

¹ Cp. Appendix A (2).

² Cp. § 130. cxix. and Introduction.

³ Pss. xci, cxxxix, cxvi.

⁴ Pss. ciii, civ.

⁵ Pss. cxlv—cl. from this; as xxxiii, lxvi. 1—12, lxvii, lxxxii, from an earlier time.

BOOK V. [SECTIONS 130—153.]

CLOSE OF THE PSALTER.

§ 130. PSALM CXIX.

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM.

MANY Psalms¹ present themselves in the Psalter composed on the acrostic or alphabetical arrangement, of which the most elaborate and extended specimens are found in the Lamentations and the 119th Psalm. As the name 'Alphabetical' implies, each letter of the alphabet in order forms the initial letter of consecutive verses. In some² each letter is once employed: in the 3rd chapter of Lamentations³, each letter forms the beginning of three, and in the 119th Psalm, of eight consecutive verses. Such an arrangement is by its nature constrained and artificial: adapted for didactic rather than for lyric expression, it belongs to an age no longer animated by the soul of poetry, but struggling to clothe its religious thoughts in a poetic form. No one who has formed any adequate conception of the genius of David, could fancy his selecting an arrangement which hinders the flow of thought and language, and often necessitates repetition of ideas. Indeed in the earliest specimen of the Alphabetical Psalm⁴, assuming that Psalms ix, x. form one poem, we see how uneasily the spirit of the Hebrew poet bore its shackles and how, when the Psalmist found full expression for his thought in an older poem, he abandoned the alphabetical structure to introduce it. In short, the system belongs not to the period of national prosperity and vigorous life, but to the time of its

¹ § 61. ix, x; § 62. xxxvii; §§ 77, 78. xxv, xxxiv; § 130. cxix; §§ 135, 136. cxi, cxii; § 147. cxlv. See § 61, note on alphabetical structure.

³ See § 161 in Supplement.

² §§ 77, 78, 62.

⁴ § 61. ix, x.

decadence and extinction. Religion is no longer connected with national triumphs, no longer enters into the administration of a prosperous kingdom. There has opened a wide gulf between the godly and the world. Religious meditation had become the stay of the afflicted, their only refuge from unrighteous rulers. The Alphabetical arrangement was doubtless found an aid to memory, and the Psalmist or Prophet naturally employed it as a vehicle whether for Lamentations or for consolations addressed to others; or for purposes of private devotion, to reiterate his confidence in the watchful protection of Jehovah¹, to dwell on His attributes², and meditate lovingly on every aspect and title of His written Law³.

The 119th Psalm calls to mind the feelings and poetry of the monastic ages⁴. It is the work of one who has witnessed a good confession⁵, able to look back upon a life of adherence to Jehovah in the midst of persecution, derision and scorn⁶, chastened by the afflictions of life⁷, devoted to meditation⁸, blessed with a sense of God's love and an earnest desire to do His will⁹, ever longing for a fuller knowledge of His Law¹⁰.

If we would fathom the depth of meaning in the written Law of Israel, if we would measure the elevation of soul, the hope, the confidence even before princes and kings, which pious Jews derived from it, we must turn to this Psalm. Here is an epitome of all true religion as conceived by the best spirits of that time. To such a loving study and meditation on the Law the Alphabetical arrangement is not inappropriate, and if the poem be necessarily somewhat cramped, it is nevertheless pervaded by the glow of love and abounds in spiritual life. Thus it will ever remain a treasured specimen if not of the lyric genius and inspiration of the Hebrews, at least of the high feelings and aspirations of the second childhood of the nation—a period to which it is assigned not only by the general thought but by express reference to the author's captivity¹¹.

¹ § 77. xxv.² § 147. cxlv.³ § 130. cxix.⁴ Cp. Trench's *Sacred Latin Poetry*, p. 227. Alard, *De Nomine Jesu*.⁵ vv. 150, 157, 161.⁶ vv. 61, 87, 51, 85, 143.⁷ v. 67.⁸ vv. 62, 127, 148.⁹ vv. 106, 112, 163.¹⁰ vv. 33, 66, 125.¹¹ v. 54.

Here as in the other Psalms of the same structure, an attempt has been made to present in English the original form, because the Alphabetical arrangement is the very life of the poem; and where there is apparent forcing, it must be remembered that this is a version of poems which are by their very nature constrained.

A meditation on the law of God.

- A** blessing is on them that are undefiled in the way, 1
and walk in the law of Jehovah;
- A** blessing is on them that keep His testimonies, 2
and seek Him with their whole heart :
- Also** on them that do no wickedness, 3
but walk in His ways.
- A** law hast thou given unto us, 4
that we should diligently keep Thy commandments.
- Ah!** Lord, that my ways were made so direct, 5
that I might keep Thy statutes !
- And** then shall I not be confounded, 6
while I have respect unto all Thy commandments.
- As** for me, I will thank Thee with an unfeigned heart, 7
when I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments.
- An** eye will I have unto Thy ceremonies, 8
O forsake me not utterly.
- By** what shall a young man cleanse his way? 9
even by ruling himself after Thy word !
- B**etimes have I sought Thee with my whole heart, 10
O let me not go wrong out of Thy commandments ;
- B**ehold, Thy words have I hid within my heart, 11
that I might not sin against Thee !
- B**lessed art Thou, O Jehovah ; 12
O teach me Thy statutes.
- By** my lips have I proclaimed 13
all the judgments of Thy mouth.

- B**etter is it to walk in the way of Thy statutes, 14
than to possess all manner of riches.
- B**efore mine eyes are Thy commandments, 15
and I have respect unto Thy ways!
- B**lessed for ever are Thy statutes, 16
I will not forsake Thy word.
- C**omfort Thy servant, that I may live 17
and keep Thy word!
- C**ome Thou and open mine eyes, 18
that I may see the wondrous things of Thy law.
- C**onsider how that I am a stranger upon earth; 19
O hide not Thy commandments from me!
- C**onsumed is my soul by the very fervent desire, 20
that it hath always unto Thy judgments.
- C**onfounded are the proud, 21
and cursed are they that do err from Thy commandments.
- C**ontempt and reproach do Thou turn from me, 22
for I have kept Thy testimonies!
- C**ounsel have princes taken against me, 23
but Thy servant is occupied in Thy statutes;
- C**ontinually is my delight in Thy testimonies, 24
for they are my counsellors.
- D**eep in the dust lieth my soul, 25
O quicken Thou me according to Thy word!
- D**uly have I acknowledged my ways and Thou heardest me, 26
O teach me Thy statutes!
- D**eclare unto me the way of Thy commandments, 27
and so shall I talk of Thy wondrous works.
- D**isquieted is my soul for very heaviness; 28
O comfort Thou me according to Thy word.
- D**o Thou take from me the way of lying, 29
and cause me to make much of Thy law;

- D**ear unto me is the way of truth, 30
and Thy judgments have I laid before me.
- D**o not I cleave unto Thy testimonies? 31
O Jehovah, confound me not.
- D**aily will I run in the way of Thy commandments, 32
when Thou hast set my heart at liberty.
- E**nlighten me, O Jehovah, in the way of Thy statutes; 33
and I shall keep it unto the end.
- E**nrich me with understanding and I shall keep Thy law, 34
yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.
- E**xercise me in the path of Thy commandments, 35
for therein is my desire.
- E**ncline mine heart unto Thy testimonies, 36
and not to covetousness.
- E**ver turn away mine eyes, lest they behold vanity, 37
and quicken Thou me in Thy way.
- E**stablish Thy word in Thy servant,— 38
even that we should fear Thee.
- E**ase me from the rebuke that I am afraid of, 39
for Thy judgments are good.
- E**ven in Thy precepts is my delight, 40
O quicken me in Thy righteousness.
- F**ollow me, O Jehovah, with Thy loving mercy, 41
even with Thy salvation according to Thy word.
- F**or so shall I make answer unto my blasphemers, 42
for my trust is in Thy word.
- F**orbear to take Thy truth utterly out of my mouth, 43
for my hope is in Thy judgments.
- F**or so shall I always keep Thy law, 44
yea, for ever and ever.
- F**ree me and I shall walk at liberty, 45
because I seek Thy commandments.

- F**aithfully will I speak of Thy testimonies, 46
even before kings I will not be ashamed.
- F**ull of delight are Thy commandments, 47
which I have loved.
- F**or ever will I lift up my hands unto Thy commandments, 48
and my study shall be in Thy statutes.
- G**raciously think upon Thy servant as concerning Thy word, 49
wherein Thou hast caused me to put my trust.
- G**reat is the comfort thereof in my trouble, 50
for Thy word hath quickened me.
- G**rievously have the proud had me in derision, 51
yet have I not shrinked from Thy law.
- G**lad was I when I remembered Thine everlasting judgments, 52
O Jehovah, and received comfort.
- G**reat horror hath taken hold upon me, 53
because of the wicked that forsake Thy law.
- G**lorious things have I sung of Thy statutes 54
in the house of my pilgrimage.
- G**ladly have I thought upon Thy Name in the night season, 55
O Jehovah, and have kept Thy law.
- G**racious hast Thou been unto me, 56
because I kept Thy commandments.
- H**ave not I promised to keep Thy law? 57
for Thou art my portion, O Jehovah!
- H**umbly have I made my petitions with my whole heart, 58
O be merciful unto me according to Thy word.
- H**ave not I called mine own ways to remembrance, 59
and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies?
- H**aste have I made and prolonged not the time, 60
to keep Thy commandments.
- H**idden snares of the ungodly beset me on every side, 61
but I have not forgotten Thy law.

Hear me at midnight when I rise to thank Thee, 62
because of Thy righteous judgments.

Holy men are my companions, 63
and such as keep Thy commandments.

Hast not Thou, O Jehovah, filled the earth with Thy mercy? 64
O teach me Thy statutes.

In mercy hast Thou, O Jehovah, dealt with Thy servant, 65
according unto Thy word.

Instruct me in true understanding and knowledge, 66
for I have believed Thy commandments.

I went wrong before I was troubled, 67
but now have I kept Thy word.

In Thee, O Lord, is goodness and mercy; 68
O teach me Thy statutes.

Iniquitous men have imagined a lie against me, 69
but I will keep Thy commandments with my whole heart.

In truth their heart is as fat as brawn, 70
but my delight hath been in Thy law.

It is good for me that I have been in trouble, 71
that I might learn Thy statutes.

Is not the law of Thy mouth dearer unto me 72
than thousands of gold and silver?

Jehovah, Thy hands have made me and fashioned me, 73
O give me understanding—to learn Thy commandments.

Joyful shall they be that fear Thee when they see me, 74
because I have put my trust in Thy word.

Just are Thy judgments, O Jehovah; 75
Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be troubled.

Jehovah, let Thy merciful kindness be my comfort, 76
according to Thy word unto Thy servant.

Jehovah, let Thy loving mercies come unto me, 77
for Thy law is my delight.

- J**udge Thou the proud, for they go about to destroy me, 78
but I am occupied in Thy commandments.
- J**oin unto me those that fear Thy Name, 79
and such as have known Thy testimonies.
- J**oyfully shall my heart continue in Thy statutes, 80
that I be not ashamed.
- L**ong have I desired Thy salvation, 81
and my hope is in Thy word.
- L**onged have mine eyes for Thy word; 82
saying, 'O when wilt Thou comfort me?'
- L**ike a bottle in the smoke am I dried up, 83
yet do I not forget Thy statutes.
- L**ord! how few are the days of Thy servant! 84
when wilt Thou be avenged of them that persecute me?
- L**awless men, which walk not in Thy ways, 85
have digged pits for my life.
- L**ord, all Thy commandments are true; 86
they persecute me falsely: O be Thou my help.
- L**o! they had almost made an end of me upon earth, 87
but I forsook not Thy commandments.
- L**et Thy lovingkindness quicken my soul, 88
so shall I keep the testimonies of Thy mouth.
- M**arvellous is Thy word, O Jehovah; 89
it endureth for ever in heaven.
- M**indful art Thou of Thy truth to all generations, 90
Thou hast laid the foundation of the earth and it abideth.
- M**orning and evening await Thine ordinance, 91
for all these things do serve Thee.
- M**y delight hath been in Thy law, 92
else had I perished in my trouble.

Ver. 83. *bottle in the smoke.* The bottle being of skin would shrivel and burn in the smoke like leather; an apt metaphor for one, the sap of whose life was dried up by trouble.

- M**indful am I of Thy commandments,
for with them hast Thou quickened me. 93
- M**ercifully save me, for I am Thine,
and I have sought Thy commandments. 94
- M**alicious men laid wait for me to destroy me,
but I will consider Thy testimonies. 95
- M**ine eye seeth an end of all perfection,
but Thy commandment is exceeding broad. 96
- N**ought love I like unto Thy law,
all the day long is my study in it. 97
- N**ow am I wiser than mine enemies,
for Thy commandments are ever with me. 98
- N**ay, I have more understanding than my teachers,
for Thy testimonies are my study. 99
- N**ot even the aged are wiser than I,
because I keep Thy commandments. 100
- N**ever will I turn my foot to any evil way,
that I may keep Thy word. 101
- N**either have I shrunk from Thy judgments,
for Thou teachest me. 102
- N**othing is sweeter than Thy words unto my throat;
yea, sweeter are they than honey to my mouth. 103
- N**eeds must I hate every evil way,
for through Thy precepts do I get understanding. 104
- O** God! Thy word is a lantern unto my feet,
and a light unto my paths. 105
- O**f old have I sworn, I am steadfastly purposed
to keep Thy righteous judgments. 106
- O**ut of measure am I troubled;
quicken me, O Jehovah, according to Thy word. 107

- Lord, let the freewill offerings of my mouth please Thee, 108
 and teach me Thy judgments.
- ftimes have I put my life in my hand, 109
 yet do I not forget Thy law.
- n every side have they laid a snare for me, 110
 but yet I swerved not from Thy commandments.
- Lord, Thy testimonies are mine heritage for ever, 111
 and why? they are the very joy of my heart.
- ccupied is my heart in Thy statutes, 112
 that I may fulfil them even unto the end.
- P**rofane persons do I hate, 113
 but Thy law do I love.
- P**rotection art Thou unto me and shield, 114
 and my trust is in Thy word.
- P**art from me, ye evildoers, 115
 for I will keep the commandments of my God.
- P**reserve me according to Thy word, that I may live; 116
 and let me not be disappointed of my hope.
- P**revent me with Thy help, and I shall be safe; 117
 yea, my delight shall be ever in Thy statutes.
- P**erished are all they that depart from Thy statutes, 118
 for they imagine but deceit.
- P**ut away like dross all the ungodly of the earth, 119
 then shall I love Thy testimonies.
- P**erplexed am I, I tremble for fear of Thee, 120
 yea, I am afraid of Thy judgments.
- R**ighteous and lawful are my dealings; 121
 O give me not over unto mine oppressors.
- R**ise up and be surety for Thy servant for good, 122
 that the proud do me no wrong.

- R**emember how mine eyes fail with looking for Thy help, 123
and for the word of Thy righteousness.
- R**eward Thou Thy servant according to Thy loving 124
mercy, and teach me Thy statutes.
- R**ecompense Thy servant with understanding, 125
that I may know Thy testimonies.
- R**ise up, Jehovah!—yea, the time is come— 126
for they have destroyed Thy law.
- R**ight dearly do I love Thy precepts, 127
yea, above gold and precious stones.
- R**espect have I unto all Thy commandments, 128
and all false ways I utterly abhor.
- S**ure and wonderful are Thy testimonies; 129
therefore doth my soul keep them.
- S**o soon as Thy word goeth forth, 130
it giveth light and understanding unto the simple;
- S**urely I opened my mouth and panted, 131
for I longed for Thy commandments.
- S**end help, O God; be merciful unto me, 132
as Thou usest to do unto them that love Thy name.
- S**et my steps aright in Thy word; 133
so shall no wickedness have dominion over me.
- S**ave me from the wrongful dealings of men; 134
and so shall I keep Thy commandments.
- S**hew the light of Thy countenance upon Thy servant; 135
and teach me Thy statutes.
- S**treams of waters run down mine eyes, 136
because they keep not Thy law.
- T**hou art righteous, O Jehovah, 137
and true is Thy judgment.
- T**he testimonies which Thou hast commanded, 138
are exceeding righteous and true.

- The** zeal of mine heart hath even consumed me, 139
because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words.
- Thy** word is tried to the uttermost, 140
and Thy servant loveth it.
- Though** I am small and of no reputation, 141
yet do I not forget Thy commandments.
- Thy** righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, 142
and Thy law is the truth.
- Trouble** and heaviness have taken hold upon me, 143
yet is my delight in Thy commandments.
- The** righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting; 144
O grant me understanding, and I shall live.
- Unto** Thee will I call with my whole heart, 145
hear me, O Jehovah, I will keep Thy statutes.
- Unto** Thee, O Jehovah, do I call: 146
help me and I shall keep Thy testimonies.
- Uprising** early do I cry unto Thee, 147
for in Thy word is my trust.
- Uprisen** am I before the night-watches, 148
that I might be occupied in Thy words.
- Up,** Lord, and hear me according to Thy loving mercy; 149
O Jehovah, quicken me as Thou art wont.
- Unholy** men draw nigh to persecute me, 150
they are far from Thy law.
- Upon** Thee do I call, for Thou art near, 151
and all Thy commandments are true.
- Unchanged** are Thy^s testimonies of old, 152
and Thou hast founded them for ever.
- Vouchsafe** to consider mine adversity and deliver me, 153
for I do not forget Thy law.

- V**ouchsafe to plead my cause and deliver me, 154
quicken me according to Thy word.
- V**erily health is far from the ungodly, 155
for they regard not Thy statutes.
- V**ery great, O Jehovah, is Thy mercy; 156
quicken me as Thou art wont.
- V**iolent men and they that persecute me are many, 157
yet do I not swerve from Thy testimonies.
- V**exed am I when I see the transgressors, 158
because they keep not Thy law.
- V**isit me, O Jehovah, for I love Thy commandments; 159
quicken me according to Thy lovingkindness.
- V**erity and righteousness are Thine from everlasting, 160
and all Thy judgments endure for evermore.
- W**ithout cause have princes persecuted me, 161
but my heart standeth in awe of Thy word.
- W**holly do I rejoice in Thy word, 162
as one that findeth great spoil.
- W**hereas, for lies—I hate and abhor them, 163
but Thy law do I love.
- W**ith my voice do I praise Thee seven times a day, 164
because of Thy righteous judgments.
- W**ondrous peace have they that love Thy law, 165
and they are not offended at it.
- W**hen have I not looked, O Jehovah, for Thy salvation, 166
and when have I not done after Thy commandments?
- W**hen hath not my soul kept Thy testimonies, 167
and loved them exceedingly?
- W**ell have I kept Thy commandments and Thy testimonies, 168
for all my ways are before Thee.
- Y**et let my complaint come before Thee, O Jehovah! 169
give me understanding according to Thy word.

Y ea, let my supplication come before Thee ;	170
deliver me according to Thy word.	
Y et shall my lips be telling of Thy praise,	171
when Thou hast taught me Thy statutes.	
Y ea, my tongue shall sing of Thy word,	172
for all Thy commandments are righteous.	
Y ield me help with Thy right hand,	173
for I have chosen Thy commandments.	
Y eared have I for Thy help, O Jehovah,	174
and in Thy law is my delight.	
Y et shall my soul live and praise Thee,	175
and Thy judgments shall help me.	
Y ea, seek me, though I stray like a sheep that is lost,—	176
seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments.	

§§ 131, 132. PSALMS CIII, CIV.

IN¹ these two magnificent Psalms appear everywhere the characteristics which distinguish them from all other national literature of old,—that love of Nature, with the insight that comes of love;—that conviction of the unity of all things in earth and sea and sky as one harmonious frame;—but above all, that which was to be the noble heritage of the Jews to mankind,—their appointed contribution to the development of their race,—the deep sense that the Worker was still indwelling in every atom of His work, and their almost unrelenting, their almost obstinate refusal from beginning to end, to look for a moment on God's universe without looking upon God. This persistency it is that gives to these Psalms what is now-a-days termed the 'lyric cry;'—this kind of persistency it is that may raise man's life from prose to poetry.

To this spirit all else became subordinate;—the country's history, its geographical position, its glory, its failures. The Lord who 'turned

¹ This Introduction is taken by permission from a Sermon preached by the Rev. James Robertson in the Chapel of Rugby School, and printed for private circulation.

the hard rock into a standing water, and the flint stone into a springing well,' was the same Lord who 'stood round about His people, as the hills stand about Jerusalem.' The prosperous people who stood on the mid highways of the commerce of the East, as Homer's 'wealthy Corinth' did in the West, supplemented the vines of Eshcol and the flocks of Gilead with Egypt's chariots and Ophir's gold. Many a tale and many a sign in the time of Israel's glory came to her from day to day of distant people and of wondrous lands, by tributary and embassy and richly-laden caravan. But to the grand and fixed monotheism of her exalted poesy—all these, aye, and all the contraries of these, her sins, her sorrows, her humiliation too, are made subservient and attuned.

It might be well for other nations that with them the sun god should drive his golden chariot, or Aphrodite be born of the green sea foam¹; that Dryads and Satyrs should share their noonday haunts, or Hecate demand her tribute of the night;—that a shapeless Nemesis should scatter the proud, or that anon, as they peopled the earth with the myriad fictions of their fancy,

on every dark and awful place
rude hill and haunted wood,
the beautiful bright people left
a name of omen good;—

but with the Hebrew,—with these destined teachers of the future and of us,—every broken light was to be gathered up and centred in the all-embracing sunshine of Jehovah's countenance.

In no one spot in the Hebrew literature is all this more impressively set before us than in these two Psalms. Of these, the 104th is the hymn of nature; the 103rd, the hymn of grace. One could almost wish the last came first, as the knowledge of the world about us comes to us before the knowledge of our hearts. And yet there is a fitness in their order, as though it were only the confession of our sin and the reopening of God's mercy which could fit the soul to share in that long triumphant song of praise.

If we look into this long Psalm, we learn to see God from it, in all

¹ Cp. § III. xciv. 3, 5.

things near and far, in all things great and small. It is a very epitome of the universe; it is that at which Humboldt, who traversed the whole range of human knowledge as perhaps no other man has done, confessed his soul astonished. Verse after verse rolls by, as it were a vast panorama unfolded, past us, slow moving to the very music of the spheres. There is the light wherewith God decks Himself as with a garment:—the heavens that He spreads out like a curtain. The foundations of the earth;—the waters that are afraid at the voice of His thunder. The beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, and the trees of the Lord that are full of sap. The moon for certain seasons; and the sun that knoweth his going down; the lions roaring after their prey, that do seek their meat from God. Man amid this vast creation going and coming in security. He goeth forth to his work and to his labour; until the evening. The ships, and the Leviathan, and all waiting upon God. When Thou lettest Thy breath go forth they shall be made; when Thou takest away their breath they die and are turned again to their dust.

It may be that there are higher mysteries even than these; but where can we learn as we can from this Psalm to open our eyes, and our ears;—to look upon God's face; to listen to God's whisper? And this great lesson, to see God in all His works, which was taught by a Hebrew Psalmist when the light of physical science had not even dawned, is no less true and no less needful now, when it is approaching its meridian splendour.

We all like those books of travel and adventure which lead us, in company with brave or inquisitive spirits, over mighty waters and distant lands, to range the wonders of the world. To sail round the globe with one, to traverse polar ice-plains with another, to ransack the riches of the tropics with a third, is the healthy and legitimate exercise of the curiosity of the growing mind. But what an intensity, what a reality will it give to all these pleasant pictures if we carry into all our reading as a silent necessary unobtrusive accompaniment the thought of the presence of God! The Erebus and Terror¹ in the lonely silence of the Antarctic circle, or Humboldt or Livingstone wandering

¹ See *The Voyage of the Erebus and Terror*.

among tropical forests, these are grand pictures indeed to stir man's imagination and to touch his heart. But how a thousand-fold more so will he find this when once he learns to see God Himself enthroned amid His frosty lights at either end of Heaven, or holding high court amid the myriad-winged hum and the quivering vapours of Nyanza or the Amazon!

We all like the glorious realm of animated beings which God has made our fellow denizens of this fair earth. But how little of their message shall we learn, if we learn not also to think continually of Him whose breath of life is in their nostrils. Be it the king of the forest with his rolling muscles of steel and his neck of power, or the mimic polity of some little wayside pool, it is this thought alone that can make man love them as he ought, and learn too at last that—

he prayeth best, who loveth best
all things both great and small;
for the dear God who loveth us,
he made and loveth all.

Again there is the mental stimulus which is presented to us as we see or read of the triumphs of mankind over nature's elements. To span the cataract, to pierce through mountains, to whisper lightning-winged words to the end of the earth, to make the sun a painter at our bidding, these, and all the countless trophies of man's intellect with which our modern civilization is crowded, all the feats of engineer and chemist and astronomer, may surely stir feelings of exultation and thought of enterprise. But here and nowhere more must God still reign supreme. Strange riot does man's philosophy run, and strange shipwreck does it make, when it forgets God's presence here and arrogates the glory to itself.

§ 131. PSALM CIII.

THE key-note of the 103rd Psalm is the fatherly love and care of God, a truth which appears, if not for the first time, at least with a fresh force in all the writings of this time. 'Is Ephraim my dear son?

is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him: therefore My bowels are troubled for him, saith the Lord¹. 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, these may forget, yet will not I forget thee², saith the Lord.'

Such is the touching expression of the paternal affection of God for man which was called into life by the sense of His continual protection amidst the afflictions of the Captivity. In the days of national prosperity the exalted and the mighty had alone seemed worthy of the title of 'sons of God:' now the whole nation had fled to the eternal arms as a suffering child to the bosom of its mother, and had realized in the deepened conviction of human weakness and divine omnipotence, of human sin and divine compassion, that sense of kinship to God which is the truest bond of sympathy among men and therefore the proper prelude to the Christian prayer.

This sense of God's fatherly love to man forms the centre of the Psalm. The revelation of the Law to Moses, the history of national sins, the divine forgiveness shown in the restoration of the national life, the conviction that disobedience had hindered the flow of divine goodness, 'that had they hearkened unto God's commandments then had their peace been as a river and their righteousness as the waves of the sea³,'—all these topics are urged in verses⁴ of exquisite pathos and beauty to incite the people to glorify Him who had 'blotted out their transgressions so that they vanished as a cloud⁵,' and had shown Himself 'the Saviour and Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob.' The central portion of the Psalm is retrospective, and takes its tone from the history of the nation. The concluding portion is bright with the glorious hopes of deliverance and with the assurance of God's forgiveness alike to individuals and to the community at large. It is ushered in by a joyful acknowledgment of the mercies of Jehovah experienced by the Psalmist himself, and closes with a triumphant appeal to every portion of the universe and above all to the hierarchy of heaven to unite in glorifying the Omnipotent Ruler of the world.

¹ Jer. xxxi. 20.² Is. xlix. 15.³ Is. xlviii. 18.⁴ *vv.* 1—5.⁵ Is. xliv. 22.

I. *Praise due to God for His lovingkindness to each of His children,*

<i>Praise Jehovah, O my soul,</i>	I
<i>and all that is within me praise His holy Name.</i>	
Praise Jehovah, O my soul,	2
and forget not all His benefits;	
who forgiveth all thy sin	3
and healeth all thine infirmities;	
who saveth thy life from destruction,	4
and crowneth thee with mercy and lovingkindness;	
who satisfieth thy desire with good things,	5
making thee young and lusty as an eagle.	

II. *for His revelation of Himself to mankind,*

Jehovah executeth righteousness	6
and judgment for all them that are oppressed with wrong;	
He shewed His ways unto Moses,	7
His works unto the children of Israel;	
Jehovah is full of compassion and mercy,	8
long-suffering and of great goodness,	
He will not alway be chiding,	9
neither keepeth He His anger for ever.	

III. *for His mercy in forgiving sins,*

He hath not dealt with us after our sins,	10
nor rewarded us according to our wickednesses;	
for look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth,	11
so great is His mercy also towards them that fear Him :	

Ver. 5. *as an eagle.* As the eagle moults its feathers every year, and renews its strength, so is the believer in God renewed. Cp. Is. xl. 31,

‘They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall renew their wings, as eagles,’

and Ter. *Heaut.* 3. 2. 11.

Ver. 8. *full of compassion.* Cp. Exod. xxxiv. 6.

look how wide also the east is from the west, 12
 so far hath He set our sins from us :
 yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, 13
 even so is Jehovah merciful unto them that fear Him.

IV. *for His compassionate dealings with His creatures,*

For He knoweth whereof we are made, 14
 He remembereth that we are but dust ;
 the days of man are but as grass, 15
 he flourisheth as a flower of the field :
 for as soon as the wind goeth over it, it is gone, 16
 and the place thereof shall know it no more :
 but the merciful goodness of Jehovah endureth for ever and ever
 upon them that fear Him, [17
 and His righteousness unto children's children,
 even upon such as keep His covenant, 18
 and think upon His commandments to do them.

V. *and for His sovereignty over the world.*

Jehovah hath prepared His seat in heaven, 19
 and His kingdom ruleth over all.
 O praise Jehovah, ye angels of His, 20
 ye that excel in strength and do His commandment,
 and hearken unto the voice of His words.
 O praise Jehovah, all ye His hosts, 21
 ye servants of His, that do His pleasure :
 O speak good of Jehovah all ye works of His, 22
 in all places of His dominion !
Praise thou Jehovah, O my soul.

Ver. 20. *angels—excel in strength, i. e.* the mighty ones, the warrior host. Cp. Joel iii. 11, (where 'Thy mighty ones' (A. V.) means the angels,) and the expressions below, '*Ye that excel in strength, &c.*'

Vv. 20—22. *angels—hosts—works*, the three orders of created beings who carry out the behests of God, (1) the highest angels in the immediate presence of God ; cp. § 7. xxix. ver. 1, note, (2) the hosts of heaven including the stars, the winds 'His messengers,' (3) His creatures, or *works* on earth.

§ 132. PSALM CIV.*

A HYMN of praise to Jehovah as the Almighty Creator of the world.

The Psalmist does not regard God as calling the world into existence and establishing order out of chaos, to retire into an epicurean rest and reveal Himself only by special manifestations to His creatures. His is the sustaining hand which supports all things; it is in Him that they live and move and have their being. The more awful operations of His hands, the heavens parting from the earth, the hills uprising and the valleys subsiding by His word, do not more truly proclaim His power and beneficence, than the grass upon the mountains or the smallest creatures that enjoy His bounty and owe their existence to His will. This it is which fills the Psalmist with love and praise¹; this is his assurance that sin and ungodliness are only for a season and must vanish from the world which God has made². Instinct as every living and created thing is to the Psalmist's mind with the message of God's love, he carries the thought into the minutest detail, and yet the picture of creation which he sets before us is hardly less grand and simple than that in Genesis³ by which he is obviously inspired.

1. *Praise to God, for He created the heavens,*

Praise Jehovah, O my soul!

I

O Jehovah, my God, Thou art exceeding glorious,

Thou art clothed with majesty and honour!

Thou deckest Thyself with light as it were with a garment, 2
and spreadest out the heavens like a curtain;

Structure. The order of creation as given in Genesis is exactly followed here. Cp. ver. 2, the light; vv. 2—4, the heavens; vv. 5—18, the dry land; vv. 19—23, the heavenly bodies; vv. 24—26, fish and fowls; 27—30, man and beast.

Ver. 2. *like a curtain.* Cp. Is. xl. 22, 'It is He that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.'

* See Introduction to §§ 131, 132, p. 342.

¹ vv. 30—33.

² vv. 34, 35.

³ See note below on *Structure*.

who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters, 3
 and maketh the clouds His chariot,
 and walketh upon the wings of the wind;
 who maketh the winds His messengers, 4
 and the flaming fire His minister.

II. *and the earth,*

He laid the foundations of the earth, 5
 that it never should move at any time:
 Thou coveredst it with the deep like as with a garment, 6
 the waters stand on the hills:
 at Thy rebuke they flee, 7
 at the voice of Thy thunder they are afraid,
 —the mountains rise, the valleys sink— 8
 even unto the place which Thou hast appointed for them;
 Thou hast set them their bounds which they shall not pass, 9
 neither turn again to cover the earth.

III. *the dry land and all that is therein,*

He sendeth the springs into the rivers, 10
 which run among the hills;
 all beasts of the field drink thereof, 11
 and the wild asses quench their thirst;
 beside them do the fowls of the air have their habitation, 12
 and sing among the branches;

Ver. 3. *the beams of His chambers.* Cp. Am. ix. 6, 'It is He that buildeth His stories in the heavens.' As the under and dark clouds are represented as the foundations of heaven, so the lighter and ethereal clouds form its upper chambers or stories.

Ver. 4. *the flaming fire, i. e.* the lightnings.

Vv. 5—9. Observe the progress of creation, (1) the earth fixed fast ver. 5, (2) the earth covered with waters ver. 6, (3) the waters gathered in one place, and the dry land appearing (ver. 7), as described in Gen. i. 9, and compare Job xxxviii. 8.

Vv. 7, 8. *rebuke, i. e.* God's chiding voice in thunder. *are afraid even unto the place, i. e.* the waters flee in terror to their appointed beds.

Ver. 9. *them, i. e.* the waters.

Vv. 10—18. Cp. Job xxxviii. 26,

He watereth the hills from above ; 13
the earth is filled with the fruit of Thy works !

IV.

He bringeth forth grass for the cattle, 14
and green herb for the service of men,
that He may bring food out of the earth— 15
wine, that maketh glad the heart of man,
and maketh his face to shine as it were with oil,
and bread to strengthen man's heart :
the trees of Jehovah also are full of sap, 16
even the cedars of Libanus which He hath planted :
wherein the birds make their nests, 17
and the fir-trees are a dwelling for the stork ;
the high hills are a refuge for the wild goats, 18
and so are the stony rocks for the conies.

V. *the heavenly bodies,*

He appointed the moon for certain seasons, 19
and the sun knoweth his going down :
Thou makest darkness that it may be night, 20
wherein all the beasts of the forest do move ;
the lions roaring after their prey, 21
do seek their meat from God ;
the sun ariseth and they get them away together, 22
and lay them down in their dens :
man goeth forth unto his work, 23
and to his labour until the evening.

VI. *the sea and all that therein is,*

O Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works, 24
in wisdom hast Thou made them all :
the earth is full of Thy riches ;

Ver. 18. *conies*, see Glossary.

Vv. 19, 20. Cp. Job xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 24. *Thy riches*, *i.e.* the riches of Thy creation.

so is that great and wide sea also, 25
 wherein are things creeping innumerable,
 both small and great beasts;
 there go the ships 26
 and that leviathan whom Thou hast made to take his pastime
 with Thee.

VII. *God is the source of life,*

These wait all upon Thee, 27
 that Thou mayest give them meat in due season;
 when Thou givest it them, they gather it; 28
 when Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good;
 when Thou hidest Thy face, they are troubled; 29
 when Thou takest away their breath, they die,
 and are turned again to their dust;
 when Thou lettest Thy breath go forth they shall be made, 30
 and Thou renewest the face of the earth.

VIII. *the Sovereign and righteous Judge of the world.*

The glorious majesty of Jehovah shall endure for ever, 31
 Jehovah shall rejoice in His works!
 the earth shall tremble at the look of Him, 32
 if He do but touch the hills, they shall smoke.
 I will sing unto Jehovah as long as I live, 33
 I will praise my God while I have my being!
 and so shall my words please Him, 34
 my joy shall be in Jehovah!
 as for sinners, they shall be consumed out of the earth, 35
 and the ungodly shall come to an end!
Praise thou Jehovah, O my soul.

Ver. 26. *with Thee*, literally with Him, *i.e.* Jehovah. Cp. Job xli. 5, 'Wilt thou play with him [the Leviathan] as with a bird?' The meaning in both these passages is that these monsters so dangerous to man are as subdued and tame to Jehovah, as are the smaller animals to man.

§§ 133, 134. PSALMS CVI, CVII.

THESE Psalms taken together may be regarded as the lyric embodiment of the lessons of the Captivity. The whole nation had profited by the sweet uses of adversity. The central truth of all religion, the unity of God, had been learned so that it could never be forgotten: a blow had been levelled at idolatry and all its attendant evils, from which it could never recover: the conviction of God's fatherly love for all His creatures, above all for the afflicted and oppressed, had taken deep root in the national heart, and had been expressed in words of exquisite pathos by psalmist and prophet, and formed the germ of the highest conception of God, of which human nature is capable. The nation had learned also the value of obedience and of meditation, and had attained to the true conception of God's promises, as being not arbitrary or inalienable but founded on a moral basis and dependent on national¹ morality. They had learned further the efficacy of prayer, and were filled with the conviction that God did and would interfere by special interposition to rescue the faithful who pray to Him.

Such are the ideas embodied in these Psalms.

The 106th contains an analysis of Jewish history and of God's dealings with the nation, conveyed with much beauty of expression and all the pathos of individual experience. It is pervaded by a tone of melancholy; for it is sin and the consequences of sin which form the fundamental idea of the poem.

The 107th treats the same subject but from a different side: it is not the human backsliding but the divine forgiveness, not the human supplication so much as the divine answer, not the national affliction but the divine interposition which is the leading thought in the poet's mind.

Both Psalms are arranged upon the same plan. The main body of the Psalm is delivered by a leader, possibly a priest; the response is given by the people: but in the 1st the burthen is a prayer for deliverance; in the 2nd it is a joyous outburst of thanksgiving.

¹ Cp. § 144, cv. 44.

The doctrine of special providences, which may be considered to be the lesson inculcated in the 107th, is illustrated generally by historical allusions. Once however, in the centre of the Psalm, the illustration is more universal and imaginative in character. In a description of a storm at sea, unsurpassed for beauty and force by any treatment of the same subject in any language, Jehovah is represented as lashing the waves to fury by the word of His mouth, till every soul on board bows in recognition of His omnipotence and unites in supplication for His mercy; then as smoothing the billows in answer to their prayer and guiding their ship in safety to the shore. Nowhere has a nobler utterance been given 'to the overwhelming conviction of sin in the sight of one holier and higher than we: the irresistible impulse to prayer which bids us pour out our sorrows and make our wants known to one who hears and will answer us: to the indefinable and inextinguishable consciousness of a direct intercourse and communion of man with God, of God's influence upon man and (with reverence be it spoken) of man's influence upon God¹.'

This living sense of the direct communion between the spirit of man and the spirit of God, between the earthly children and the heavenly Father; this national recognition of the power of prayer, is one of the highest boons conferred by the Israelites on the world: nor is it really less valuable or true to us because their conception of God's dealing with man and His operations in the world was necessarily partial and imperfect. It is true that the Christian philosopher of to-day will look for God rather in the working of wise and eternal laws than in special interpositions, rather in unbroken succession than in arbitrary disturbance; he will pray for eyes to see God's hand in every event of every day, and will no longer ask that the All-wise should alter His government of the universe to suit the fallible desires of a human will, but rather that He should bend the human will to acquiesce in the Divinè.

It has been truly said that now we have 'distinguished between prayer and petition, and can see the difference between the petition for specific blessings and the prayer which is communion with God; and

¹ Mansel.

that we have learnt from a great example that the Divine wisdom has given us prayer, not as a means whereby to obtain the good things of earth, but as a means whereby to learn to do without them ; not as a means whereby we escape evil, but as a means whereby we become strong to meet it¹. Yet, even with our clearer light, we should be ungrateful indeed if in reading these Psalms we did not acknowledge our debt to the Hebrews of this time ; for it was amid the marvellous circumstances of their return from captivity that they won for us that idea of God as a Father which gave a new importance to prayer as contrasted with sacrifice, and thus spiritualized the whole conception of religion. Thenceforth the habit of prayer, and with it a more or less clear insight into the meaning of that habit, as the mode of spiritual communion with a Heavenly Father, becomes not merely the possession of the prophet or the poet, but the inheritance of the nation at large.

§ 133. PSALM CVI.*

Chorus.

Give thanks unto Jehovah, for He is gracious, 1
and His mercy endureth for ever !

who can express the noble acts of Jehovah, 2
or shew forth all His praise ?

blessed are all they that alway keep judgment, 3
and do righteousness.

The Priest

by reciting the history of the past, setteth forth the loving mercy of God.

Remember me, O Jehovah, according to the favour Thou bearest 4
unto Thy people,

O visit me with Thy salvation,
that I may see the felicity of Thy chosen, 5
and rejoice in the gladness of Thy people,
and give thanks with Thine inheritance !

Ver. 1. Cp. § 101. cxviii. 1—4.

Ver. 3. *keep judgment, i. e. fulfil their duty.*

¹ Robertson, Sermons, iv. p. 37.

* For Introduction see p. 353.

we have sinned with our fathers, 6
 we have done amiss and dealt wickedly!
 our fathers regarded not Thy wonders in Egypt, 7
 neither kept they Thy great goodness in remembrance,
 but were disobedient at the sea, even at the Red Sea;
 nevertheless He helped them for His Name's sake, 8
 that He might make His power to be known;
 He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up; 9
 so He led them through the deep as through a wilderness,
 and He saved them from the adversary's hand, 10
 and delivered them from the hand of the enemy;
 as for those that troubled them, the waters overwhelmed them, 11
 there was not one of them left;
 then believed they His words, 12
 and sang praise unto Him:
 but within a while they forgot His works, 13
 and would not abide His counsel,
 and lust came upon them in the wilderness, 14
 and they tempted God in the desert;
 so He gave them their desire, 15
 and sent leanness withal into their soul:
 they spake against Moses also in the camp, 16
 and Aaron, the saint of Jehovah;
 so the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, 17
 and covered the company of Abiram,
 and fire was kindled in their company, 18
 the flame burnt up the ungodly:
 they made a calf in Horeb, 19
 and worshipped the molten image,
 and changed their glory 20
 into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay,

Vv. 7—13. Cp. Exod. xiv—xvi.

Ver. 15. Cp. Num. xi. 20.

Vv. 19—22. Cp. Ex. xxxii—xxxiv.

and they forgat God their saviour,	21
who had done so great things in Egypt,	
wondrous works in the land of Ham,	22
and fearful things by the Red Sea :	
so He said, He would have destroyed them,	23
had not Moses His chosen stood before Him in the gap,	
to turn away His wrathful indignation, lest He should destroy	
them.	
yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land,	24
and gave no credence unto His word,	
but murmured in their tents,	25
and hearkened not unto the voice of Jehovah ;	
then lift He up His hand and sware	26
to overthrow them in the wilderness,	
to cast out their seed among the nations,	27
and to scatter them in the lands :	
they joined themselves unto Baal-peor,	28
and ate the offerings of the dead ;	
thus they provoked Him to anger with their own inventions,	29
and the plague was great among them :	
then stood up Phineas and prayed,	30
and so the plague ceased,	
and that was counted unto him for righteousness,	31
among all posterities for evermore :	
they angered Him also at the waters of Meribah,	32
so that He punished Moses for their sake,	
because they provoked his spirit,	33
so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips :	

Vv. 24—27. Cp. Num. xiv.

Ver. 26. *lift He up His hand, and sware.* Cp. Deut. xxxii. 40, 'For I lift up My hand to heaven, and say, 'As I live for ever—I will render vengeance.'''

Vv. 28—31. Cp. Num. xxv.

Ver. 28. *the dead, i. e.* dead idols as opposed to the living God.

Ver. 29. *inventions, i. e.* the doings which their own hands found to do, so in ver. 38.

Ver. 32. *Meribah.* Cp. Num. xx. 13.

neither destroyed they the heathen, 34
 as Jehovah commanded them,
 but were mingled among the heathen, 35
 and learned their works,
 insomuch that they worshipped their idols, 36
 which were a snare unto them ;
 yea, they offered their sons
 and their daughters unto devils,
 and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their
 daughters, [37
 whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan,
 and the land was defiled with blood ;
 thus were they stained with their own works, 38
 and went a whoring with their own inventions :
 therefore was the wrath of Jehovah kindled against His people, 39
 insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance,
 and He gave them over into the hand of the heathen, 40
 and they that hated them were lords over them ;
 their enemies oppressed them, 41
 and had them in subjection :
 many a time did He deliver them, 42
 but they rebelled against Him with their own inventions,
 and were brought down in their wickedness ;
 nevertheless when He saw their adversity, 43
 He heard their complaint ;
 He thought upon His covenant, 44
 and pitied them according to the multitude of His mercies ;
 yea, He made all those
 that led them away captive to pity them.

Ver. 36. *devils*. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 17, 'They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not;' the word translated 'devils' is literally 'lords,' as opposed to the true Lord. The allusion is to the human sacrifice and abominable worship of Moloch.

Chorus.

Deliver us, O Jehovah, our God, 45
 and gather us from among the heathen,
 that we may give thanks unto Thy holy Name,
 and make our boast of Thy praise!

Priest.

Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, 46
 from everlasting and world without end,
 and let all the people say, AMEN.

Ver. 46. See Appendix A (4).

§ 134. PSALM CVIL.*

Thanksgiving to God for the reunion of the scattered exiles,

O give thanks unto Jehovah, for He is gracious, 1
and His mercy endureth for ever!
 so let them sing, whom Jehovah hath redeemed, 2
 and delivered from the hand of the enemy,
 and gathered them out of the lands, 3
 from the east and from the west,
 from the north and from the sea!

I. some of whom had been delivered from wanderings and famine,

Such as went astray in the wilderness out of the way, 4
 and found no city to dwell in,
 —hungry and thirsty, 5
 their soul fainted in them—

Structure. The italics indicate the parts in which the chorus joined; the main body of the Psalm is sung only by the leader.

Ver. 3. *sea, i.e.* the South as contrasted with the North. This cannot therefore be spoken with reference to Palestine, for in that case the sea always means the west; (cp. Num. xxxiv. 6, 'And as for the western border, ye shall even have the great sea for a border; this shall be your west border,' so Josh. i. 4, and Ezek. xlvii. 20, and § 118. cxxxix. 8, note); but it is with reference to Babylon that the *sea* means the south (cp. Isaiah xxi. 1). From this it would seem that the writer though not a captive is still in Babylon.

* See Introduction, p. 353.

so when they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble, 6
 He delivered them out of their distress ;
 He led them forth by the right way, 7
 that they might go to a city, where they might dwell ;
O that these would praise Jehovah for His goodness, 8
and the wonders that He doeth for the children of men,
 for He satisfied the empty soul, 9
 and filled the hungry soul with goodness !

II. *from prison,*

Such as sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, 10
 being fast bound in misery and iron,
 because they rebelled against the words of God, 11
 and lightly regarded the counsel of the most Highest,
 —He brought down their heart through heaviness, 12
 they fell down and there was none to help them—
 so when they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble, 13
 He delivered them out of their distress :
 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, 14
 and brake their bonds in sunder ;
O that these would praise Jehovah for His goodness, 15
and the wonders that He doeth for the children of men,
 for He hath broken the gates of brass, 16
 and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.

III. *from sickness,*

Such as were foolish by reason of their offences, 17
 and afflicted because of their wickedness,
 —their soul abhorred all manner of meat, 18
 they were even hard at death's door—
 so when they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble, 19
 He delivered them out of their distress :

Vv. 8, 15, 21, 31. *O that these*, answering to *such as* in vv. 4, 10, 17, 33.

Ver. 16. *gates of brass*, borrowed from Is. xlv. 2, 'I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.'

for He sent His word and healed them, 20
 He saved them from their destruction :
O that these would praise Jehovah for His goodness, 21
and the wonders that He doeth for the children of men,
 and offer unto Him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, 22
 and tell out His works with gladness !

IV. *from perils by sea.*

Such as go down to the sea in ships, 23
 and occupy their business in great waters,
 these men see the works of Jehovah, 24
 and His wonders in the deep ;
 for at His word the stormy wind ariseth, 25
 which lifteth up the waves thereof ;
 they are carried up to the heaven and down again to the deep ; 26
 their soul melteth away because of the trouble :
 they reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man, 27
 and are at their wits' end ;
 so when they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, 28
 He delivereth them out of their distress ;
 He maketh the storm to cease 29
 so that the waves thereof are still :
 then are they glad because that they are at rest, 30
 so He bringeth them to the haven where they would be ;
O that these would praise Jehovah for His goodness, 31
and the wonders that He doeth for the children of men,
 and exalt Him in the congregation of the people, 32
 and praise Him in the seat of the elders !

V. *The praise of God as the Creator and Preserver of His people.*

He turneth the floods into a wilderness, 33
 and the water-springs into dry ground ;
 a fruitful land maketh He barren, 34
 for the wickedness of them that dwell therein ;

again, He maketh the wilderness a standing water,	35
and water-springs of a dry ground;	
and there He setteth the hungry,	36
and they build them a city to dwell in;	
they sow their land and plant vineyards	37
to yield them fruits of increase;	
He blesseth them so that they multiply exceedingly,	38
and suffereth not their cattle to decrease;	
again, when they are minished and brought low,	39
through oppression, through any plague or trouble,	
He poureth contempt upon princes,	40
and maketh them wander out of the way in a wilderness;	
yet helpeth He the poor out of misery,	41
He maketh him households like a flock of sheep;	
the righteous will consider this and rejoice,	42
and the mouth of all wickedness shall be stopped.	
<i>Whoso is wise will ponder these things,</i>	43
<i>and they shall understand the lovingkindness of Jehovah.</i>	

Ver. 40. *them*, i.e. the princes, the oppressors of Israel. The expression *pour contempt upon princes* is taken from Job xii. 21, and *causeth them to wander out of the way in the wilderness* is from ver. 24.

§§ 135, 136. PSALMS CXI, CXII.

THESE two Alphabetical¹ Psalms are closely connected together. In the first are proclaimed the praise, the greatness and the works of Jehovah; in the second the praise, the greatness and the works of His worshippers.

§ 135. PSALM CXI.

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM.

The praise, the greatness and the works of God.

All my heart shall praise Jehovah,I
Before the congregation of the righteous;

¹ See § 61, note on Alphabetical Structure, and § 130, Introduction.

Deeds of goodness are the deeds of Jehovah, 2
Earnestly desired of all them that have pleasure therein;
For His righteousness endureth for ever, 3
Glorious and honourable is His work;
He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered, 4
In Jehovah is compassion and goodness;
Jehovah hath given meat to them that fear Him, 5
Keeping His covenant for ever,
Learning His people the power of His works, 6
Making them to possess the heritage of the heathen;
Nay, the works of His hands are verity and judgment, 7
Ordered and sure are His commands,
Planted fast for ever and ever, 8
Righteous and true are His testimonies;
Salvation hath He sent unto His people, 9
Their covenant hath He made fast for ever;
Upright and holy is His name, 10
Verily the fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom,
Yea, a good understanding have all they that do thereafter;
Zealously shall He be praised for ever.

Ver. 6. *the heritage of the heathen.* This is one of the numerous passages of Scripture which announce the advent of a great kingdom, of which Jehovah should be King and His chosen people the vicegerents. See § 136. cxii. 2. For the growth of this idea, see § 37, § 63 notes.

§ 136. PSALM CXII.

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM.

The praise, the greatness and the works of God's worshippers.

A blessing is on them that fear Jehovah, 1
Blessed is he that hath delight in His commandments;
Dominion shall be to his seed upon earth, 2
Ever shall the generation of the faithful be blessed;
Fulness and riches shall be in his house, 3
Grounded is his righteousness for ever;

H e is merciful, loving and righteous ;	4
I n the darkness there ariseth a light for the godly ;	
J oyful is he that sheweth favour and lendeth,	5
K nowledge shall he have to plead his cause !	
L o ! he shall never be moved,	6
M emorials of the righteous shall endure for ever ;	
N ever shall he be afraid of any evil tidings,	7
O n Jehovah he leaneth with a fixed heart ;	
P lanted firmly is his heart, and will not shrink ;	8
R evenged shall he be upon his enemies ;	
S cattering abroad, he giveth to the poor ;	9
T ruë and steadfast is his righteousness for ever,	
U plifted shall be his horn—with honour,	
V exation shall seize the ungodly, when he seeth it ;	10
W ith his teeth shall he gnash and consume away ;	
Y ea, the desire of the ungodly shall perish.	

§§ 137, 138. PSALMS CXIII, CXIV.

THESE two Psalms form part of a Passover service. The second part is a sequel to the first¹; but a sacrifice may not improbably have been offered in the interval between the two.

Nowhere do we find a grander picture of the great Exodus from Egypt, and of the throes of nature and of nations which attended the birth of the Israelitish kingdom.

[PSALM CXIII.]

I. God the deliverer at all times,

Praise Jehovah, O ye servants,	1
Praise the name of Jehovah !	
blessed be the name of Jehovah,	2
from this time forth for evermore !	

¹ Cp. note on cxiv. 2.

from the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same, 3
the name of Jehovah be praised!
Jehovah is high above all nations, 4
and His glory above the heavens!
who is like unto Jehovah, our God, 5
that hath His throne on high,
and yet humbleth Himself to behold 6
the things that are in heaven and in earth?
who taketh up the lowly out of the dust, 7
and lifteth the poor out of the mire,
that He may set him to rule with the princes, 8
even with the princes of His people;
He setteth the barren woman to rule over the house, 9
and to be a joyful mother of children.

Psalm cxiii. Vv. 7, 8. These verses occur also in 1 Sam. ii. 8. See Supplement § 157.

Ver. 9. *barren*. Barrenness deprived the lawful wife of the rule, as in the case of Sarah.

[PSALM CXIV.]

II. *and especially of Israel from Egypt.*

When Israel came out of Egypt, 1
and the house of Jacob from among the strange people,
Judah was His sanctuary 2
and Israel His dominion:
the sea saw that and fled, 3
Jordan was driven back;
the mountains skipped like rams, 4
and the little hills like young sheep.
What aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest; 5
and thou, Jordan, that thou wast driven back?

Psalm cxiv. Ver. 2. *His*, *i.e.* of Jehovah. The emphatic use of Jehovah's name in each of the first five verses of the 113th Psalm explains the omission of it here. This is a strong reason for supposing the two Psalms to form one whole.

Ver. 3. *the sea*. See Ex. xiv. and cp. Supplement § 161. Hab. iii. 8. *Jordan*. Cp. Josh. iii.

Ver. 4. *mountains*, *i.e.* Sinai. See Ex. xix. Cp. the older Psalm xxix. 6 (§ 7) and Supplement § 161. Hab. iii. 10, 'The mountains saw Thee and they trembled.'

ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams,	6
and ye little hills, like young sheep?	
tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord,	7
at the presence of the God of Jacob,	
who turned the hard rock into a standing water,	8
and the flint stone into a springing well.	

Ver. 8. *rock.* See Ex. xvii. Numb. xx.

§ 139. PSALM CXVII.

The praise of Jehovah.

Praise Jehovah, all ye peoples,
 magnify Him, all ye nations of the earth!
 for His merciful kindness is ever towards us,
 and the truth of Jehovah endureth for ever.
 Praise Jehovah!

§§ 140—143. PSALMS LXXXVI, CXLIII, CXLIV, CVIII.

IN times of national decadence it is from the history of the dead past rather than from the living feelings of the present that the nobler spirits derive their enthusiasm. At such periods the watchwords which roused the nation to action in former times are revered as the only oracles attainable by a less favoured generation. Hence Psalms such as the following, which were written to awake the flagging courage of the Hebrews in their decline, are rather compilations of the words and ideas of earlier poems than the fresh utterances of lyrical inspiration.

§ 140. PSALM LXXXVI.

I. *Prayer to God who will help, for He is good:*

Bow down Thine ear, O Jehovah, and hear me,
 for I am poor and in misery!

Ver. 1. Partly from § 72. xl. 16, 20, 21.

preserve Thou my soul, for I am holy, 2
 my God, save Thy servant,
 that putteth his trust in Thee !
 be merciful unto me, O Lord, 3
 for I will call daily upon Thee ;
 comfort the soul of Thy servant, 4
 for unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul !
 for Thou, O Lord, art good and gracious, 5
 and of great mercy unto all them that call upon Thee.

II. *He can help, for He ruleth over the nations :*

Give ear, O Jehovah, unto my prayer, 6
 ponder the voice of my humble desires ;
 in the time of my trouble I will call upon Thee, 7
 for Thou wilt hear me !
 among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord, 8
 there is not one that can do as Thou doest ;
 all nations, whom Thou hast made, 9
 shall come and worship Thee, O Lord,
 and shall glorify Thy name ;
 for Thou art great and doest wondrous things, 10
 Thou, O God, and Thou alone.

III. *the Psalmist will ever walk in His ways,*

Teach me Thy way, O Jehovah, 11
 and I will walk in Thy truth,
 O knit my heart unto Thee, that I may fear Thy Name !

Ver. 2. Cp. § 15. iv. 3.

Ver. 4. Cp. § 77. xxv. 1.

Ver. 6. Cp. § 103. cxvi. 2.

Ver. 8. Cp. Ex. xv. 11.

Ver. 9. Cp. § 69. xxii. 27.

Ver. 11. Cp. § 24. xxvii. 13 ; § 44. v. 8 ; § 77. xxv. 3.

I will thank Thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart, 12
 and will praise Thy Name for evermore,
 for great is Thy mercy toward me, 13
 Thou hast delivered my soul from the depths of the grave.

and will ever trust Him in danger.

O God! the proud are risen against me, 14
 and the company of violent men seek after my soul,
 and have not set Thee before their eyes;
 but Thou, Lord, art a God full of compassion and mercy, 15
 long-suffering, plenteous in goodness and truth.
 O turn Thee unto me and have mercy upon me, 16
 give Thy servant Thy strength,
 and help the son of Thine handmaid!
 shew some token upon me for good, 17
 that they who hate me may see it and be ashamed,
 because Thou, O Jehovah, hast holpen me and comforted me.

Ver. 13. *depths of the grave*, literally 'nethermost Sheol,' see note on § 65. xvi. 11.

Ver. 14. From § 48. liv. 3.

Ver. 15. Cp. Ex. xxxiv. 6.

Ver. 16. Cp. § 103. cxvi. 14.

§ 141. PSALM CXLIIL*

I. *A prayer to God in time of suffering,*

Hear my prayer, O Jehovah, and consider my desire, 1
 hearken unto me for Thy truth and righteousness' sake;
 and enter not into judgment with Thy servant, 2
 for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified;
 for the enemy hath persecuted my soul, 3
 he hath smitten my life down to the ground,
 he hath laid me in the darkness, as the men that have
 been long dead;

Ver. 2. Cp. Job xiv. 3.

Ver. 3. Cp. § 58. lxxxviii. 4, 5; and Supplement § 162. Lam. iii. 6.

* For Introduction see p. 366.

therefore is my spirit vexed within me, 4
and my heart within me is desolate.

II. *founded on His doings of old.*

Yet do I remember the time past, 5
I muse upon all Thy works,
yea, I meditate on the works of Thy hands;
I stretch forth my hands unto Thee, 6
my soul gaspeth unto Thee as a thirsty land;
hear me, O Jehovah, and that soon, for my spirit waxeth faint! 7
hide not Thy face from me,
lest I be like unto them that go down to the grave!
let me hear Thy lovingkindness betimes, for in Thee is my trust; 8
shew Thou me the way that I should walk in,
for I lift up my soul unto Thee!
deliver me, O Jehovah, from mine enemies, 9
for I flee unto Thee to hide me!

III. *Trust that God will hear the prayer of His servant.*

Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth Thee, for Thou art my God,
Thy loving Spirit shall lead me in a plain path! [10
for Thy name's sake Thou wilt quicken me, O Jehovah, 11
for Thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble,
and of Thy mercy Thou wilt slay mine enemies, 12
and destroy all them that seek my life,
for I am Thy servant!

Ver. 4. Cp. § 42. cxlii. 3, § 81. lxxvii. 3.

Ver. 5. Cp. § 81. lxxvii. 6.

Ver. 6. Cp. § 50. lxiii. 2.

Ver. 7. From § 56. xxviii. 1.

Vv. 8, 10. Cp. § 75. li. 10—13.

§ 142. PSALM CXLIV.

A COMPOSITE PSALM.*

THIS Psalm is plainly divisible into two parts: the first, consisting of 11 verses, is a compilation of older passages, apparently selected for the warlike spirit which is common to them all; the three next verses are a fragment from a much earlier time, and as such have been already given in their proper chronological place, as depicting the glories of the Davidian empire. The last verse expresses the compiler's hope that the prosperity of the golden era of David may return.

I. *The praise of God, as the God of Hosts.*

Blessed be Jehovah, my stronghold, 1
 who teacheth my hands to war,
 and my fingers to fight;
 my hope and my fortress, 2
 my castle and my deliverer,
 my shield, in Him do I trust,
 who subdueth the peoples under me;
 Jehovah, what is man that Thou hast such respect unto him, 3
 or the son of man that Thou so regardest him?
 man is like a thing of nought, 4
 his time is like a shadow that passeth away.

II. *A prayer for deliverance,*

Bow Thy heavens, O Jehovah, and come down, 5
 touch the mountains, and they shall smoke,
 cast forth Thy lightnings and tear them; 6
 shoot out Thine arrows and consume them,

Vv. 1, 2, 5—7. The expressions are borrowed from § 12. xviii. 34, 1, 48, 9, 14, 16.

Ver. 3. Cp. § 9. viii. 4.

Ver. 4. Cp. Job xiv. 2.

Ver. 5. Cp. § 132. civ. 32.

Ver. 6. *them*, i.e. the enemies of the Psalmist. The compiler quotes consecutively the

* See Appendix A (2).

send down Thine hand from above, 7
 deliver me and take me out of the great waters,
 from the hand of a strange people,
 whose mouth talketh of vanity, 8
 and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood!

III. *as He has delivered David,*

I will sing a new song unto Thee, O God, 9
 and sing praises unto Thee upon a ten-stringed lute!
 who givest victory unto kings, 10
 and hast delivered David Thy servant from the peril of
 the sword;
 take me and deliver me from the hand of a strange people, 11
 whose mouth talketh of vanity,
 and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood.

IV. *and for a restoration of the Davidic era.*

Our sons are as plants, that shoot up in their youth, 12
 our daughters are as pillars, yea as polished columns of a
 palace,
 our garners are full and plenteous with all manner of store, 13
 our sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our
 fields,
 our cattle are big with young, and no untimely birth, 14
 no going forth to war, and no complaining in our streets;—
 happy are the people that are in such a case; 15
 yea, blessed are the people, who have Jehovah for their God!

9th and 14th verses of the 18th Psalm. The omission of the intervening verses breaks the connection.

Vv. 7, 11. Cp. § 12. xviii. 44.

Ver. 8. *right hand of falsehood*, i.e. perjured, as having been uplifted, when the oath was taken. Cp. § 133. cvi. 26, Deut. xxxii. 40 (see Supplement, § 160), and Gen. xiv. 22.

§ 143. PSALM CVIII.

IS not reprinted here, as it is a mere compilation, formed by combining the end of the 57th¹ with that of the 60th² Psalm: the latter being itself a compilation³.

§§ 144—153. PSALMS CV, CXXXV, CXXXVI, CXLV—CXLVII,
XXXIII, CXLIX, CXLVIII, CL.

THE deliverance by the hand of Nehemiah was but partial; the nation had not recovered its independence. A time of foreign domination could not but bring with it the ever-recurring thought, 'shall not God restore His own? shall not God, whose immediate presence with His people is seen in all the great events of their history⁴, manifest Himself once more and restore the kingdom to Israel?' The undying faith that God would not break His covenant with His people, alone made the restoration of the national existence possible. How and when the deliverance was to be accomplished, presented itself in different ways to different minds, but the certainty of its ultimate fulfilment was heroically cherished by the nobler spirits among the Israelites, and was destroyed neither by the oppressive tyranny of the Babylonians, nor by the malicious interference of the Persian satraps⁵.

It is no wonder then that the successful building of the walls and the restoration of the ancient ritual⁶ had seemed like a ray of light in the darkness, the dawn of the coming deliverance⁷. They were not yet, it is true, a free people, but there were many signs that the tide of oppression was turned. They had seen the theocracy once more established and heard God's Law⁸, the code of that theocracy, read in their Temple and by their rulers. They had felt themselves stirred,

¹ § 52. lvii. 8—12.

³ For composite Psalms see Appendix A (2).

⁵ Neh. ii. 9; iii. 7.

⁷ Pss. xxxiii, cxlv—cl.

² § 11. lx. 5—12.

⁴ § 144. cv. 5, &c.

⁶ Ezra vii. 16—18, 27; viii. 36.

⁸ Ezra vi. 3.

like the Israelites of old, to keep their foothold in Canaan and to fight again the battles of the Judges¹; and they had lived to see that even in foreign countries men of their nation were not always despised. Ezra and Nehemiah were no doubt but samples of many Jews, who by their intercourse with the foreigner had won for their nation a respect which extended as far as their wanderings had reached. This respect became reciprocal; and it was probably about this time that a third Court, the Court of the Gentiles², was added to the Temple, a pledge at once of widening hopes and widening influence³.

From this time of reviving national life, we have a group of Psalms, intimately connected by thought and expression, which may be regarded as the work of one author.

§ 144. PSALM CV.

I. *The praise of God who hath protected His people*

O give thanks unto Jehovah and call upon His name,	1
tell the peoples what things He hath done!	
O let your songs be of Him and praise Him,	2
and let your talking be of all His wondrous works;	
rejoice in His holy name,	3
let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah;	
seek Jehovah and His strength,	4
seek His face evermore;	
remember the marvellous works that He hath done,	5
His wonders and the judgments of His mouth,	
O ye seed of Abraham His servant,	6
ye children of Jacob His chosen!	

II. *in the time of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob,*

He is Jehovah, our God,	7
His judgments are in all the world;	

¹ Neh. vi. 1. Cp. § 144. cv.

² Cp. 3 Mac. i. 9; 4 Mac. iv. 11, and *Dict. of the Bible*, 'Temple of Zerubbabel.'

³ Mal. i. 11; § 152. cxlviii. 11; § 115. xlvii. 9.

He hath been alway mindful of His covenant, 8
 of the promise made to a thousand generations,
 even the covenant that He made with Abraham, 9
 and the oath that He sware unto Isaac,
 and appointed the same unto Jacob for a law, 10
 and to Israel for an everlasting covenant,
 saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, 11
 the lot of your inheritance !
 when there were yet but a few of them, 12
 and they strangers in the land,
 what time they went from one nation to another, 13
 from one kingdom to another people ;
 He suffered no man to do them wrong, 14
 but reproved even kings for their sake ;
 touch not Mine anointed, 15
 and do My prophets no harm !

of Joseph,

Moreover He called for a dearth upon the land, 16
 and destroyed all the provision of bread ;
 but He had sent a man before them, 17
 even Joseph, who was sold to be a bond-servant,
 whose feet they hurt in the stocks, 18
 the iron entered into his soul,
 until the time that His word came, 19
 the word of Jehovah cleared him ;
 the king sent and delivered him, 20
 the prince of the people let him go free ;
 he made him lord of his house, 21
 and ruler of all his substance ;

Vv. 8—15. Cp. Gen. xii—xxv.

Ver. 15. Cp. Gen. xx. 7.

Vv. 16—24. Cp. Gen. xxxvii—l.

Ver. 16. *provision*. Literally staff of bread. Cp. Is. iii. 1.

that he might bind his princes to his pleasure,
and teach his senators wisdom ; 22

of Moses in Egypt,

so Israel came into Egypt, 23
and Jacob was a stranger in the land of Ham ;
and He increased His people exceedingly, 24
and made them stronger than their enemies,
whose heart He turned so that they hated His people, 25
and dealt untruly with His servants ;
then sent He Moses His servant, 26
and Aaron whom He had chosen ;
these shewed His signs upon them, 27
His wonders in the land of Ham :
He sent darkness, and it was dark, 28
and they were not obedient unto His word ;
He turned the waters into blood, 29
and slew their fish ;
their land brought forth frogs, 30
yea, even in the king's chambers ;
He spake the word, and there came all manner of flies, 31
and lice in all their quarters ;
He gave them hailstones for rain, 32
and flames of fire in their land ;
He smote their vines also and fig-trees, 33
and destroyed the trees that were in their coasts ;
He spake the word, and the grasshoppers came, 34
and caterpillars innumerable,
and did eat up all the grass in their land,
and devoured the fruit of their ground ;
and smote all the firstborn in their land, 35
even the chief of all their strength ;

Ver. 22. *bind, i. e.* that Joseph might bind Pharaoh's princes to do Joseph's pleasure.
teach his senators, i. e. be the leader of his ministers.

Ver. 27. *upon them, i. e.* upon the Egyptians.

He brought them forth also with silver and gold, 36
 there was not one feeble person among His tribes;
 Egypt was glad at their departing, 37
 for they were afraid of them;

and in the wilderness;

He spread out a cloud to be a covering, 38
 and fire to give light in the nightseason;
 at their desire He brought quails, 39
 and He filled them with the bread of heaven;
 He opened the rock of stone, and the waters flowed out, 40
 so that rivers ran in the dry places;
 for why? He remembered His holy promise, 41
 and Abraham His servant;

and gave them Canaan,

so He brought forth His people with joy, 42
 and His chosen with gladness;
 and gave them the lands of the heathen, 43
 and they took the labours of the peoples in possession,

on the condition that they kept His covenant.

if only they would keep His statutes, 44
 and observe His law.

§ 145. PSALM CXXXV.

A SONG OF PRAISE.

ONCE more breaks forth the oft repeated cry: Jehovah is to be praised, not only as the mighty worker, indwelling in the whole fabric of the universe, but as the all-powerful Protector, who had defeated all the gods of the heathen, and made His own people the head of the nations.

The greatness of God in creation,

O praise ye the name of Jehovah,	1
praise it, ye servants of Jehovah,	
ye that stand in the house of Jehovah,	2
in the courts of the house of our God!	
O praise Jehovah, for Jehovah is gracious,	3
O sing praises unto His name, for it is lovely!	
for why? Jehovah hath chosen Jacob unto Himself,	4
and Israel for His own possession;	
for I know that Jehovah is great,	5
and that our God is above all gods;	
whatsoever Jehovah pleaseth, that He doeth	6
in heaven and in earth,	
in the sea and in all deep places;	
He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth,	7
He sendeth forth lightnings with the rain,	
He bringeth the wind out of His treasures;	

and in His doings for His people,

He smote the firstborn of Egypt,	8
both of man and beast;	

Vv. 1, 2. From § 97. cxxxiv. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. From § 46. lii. 10.

Ver. 7. From Jer. x. 13.

He sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O thou 9
 land of Egypt,
 upon Pharaoh, and all his servants ;
 He smote divers nations, 10
 and slew many kings,
 Sihon king of the Amorites and Og the king of Basan, 11
 and all the kingdoms of Canaan,
 and gave their land to be an heritage, 12
 even an heritage unto Israel His people ;
 Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever ; 13
 so doth Thy memorial, O Jehovah, from one generation to
 another ;
 for Jehovah will judge His people, 14
 and be gracious unto His servants.

compared with the vanity of idols.

As for the images of the heathen, they are but silver and gold, 15
 the work of men's hands ;
 they have mouths, and speak not ; 16
 eyes have they, but they see not ;
 they have ears, and yet they hear not, 17
 neither is there any breath in their mouths :
 they that make them shall be like unto them, 18
 and so shall all they that put their trust in them !
 Praise Jehovah, ye house of Israel, 19
 praise Jehovah, ye house of Aaron,
 praise Jehovah, ye house of Levi, 20
 praise Jehovah, ye that fear Jehovah ;
 praised out of Sion be Jehovah, 21
 who dwelleth at Jerusalem.

Vv. 15—18. From § 102. cxv. 4—11.

Ver. 20. *ye that fear Jehovah*, an expression used to include proselytes.

§ 146. PSALM CXXXVI.*

A SONG OF THANKSGIVING.

O give thanks unto Jehovah, for He is gracious, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	1
O give thanks unto the God of all gods, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	2
O give thanks unto the Lord of all lords, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	3
Who alone doeth great wonders, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	4
Who by His excellent wisdom made the heavens, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	5
Who laid out the earth above the waters, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	6
Who hath made the great lights, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	7
the sun to rule the day, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	8
the moon and the stars to govern the night, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	9
Who smote the firstborn of Egypt, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	10
and brought out Israel from among them, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	11
with a mighty hand and stretched out arm, <i>for His mercy endureth for ever !</i>	12

Structure. The thoughts of the 135th Psalm here reappear in a different arrangement: the mention of each great act of Jehovah is followed by a burden, in which the whole congregation bear witness that the mercy of God is the true ground of His praise.

In each verse, the words 'O give thanks unto Jehovah' must be supplied before the burden.

* See Introduction, p. 372.

- Who divided the Red Sea in two parts, 13
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
and made Israel to go through the midst of it, 14
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
and overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea, 15
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
Who led His people through the wilderness, 16
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
Who smote great kings, 17
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
yea, and slew mighty kings, 18
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
Sihon king of the Amorites, 19
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
and Og the king of Basan, 20
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
and gave away their land for an heritage, 21
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
even for an heritage unto Israel, His servant, 22
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
Who remembered us when we were in trouble, 23
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
and hath delivered us from our enemies, 24
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
Who giveth food to all flesh, 25
 for His mercy endureth for ever !
O give thanks unto the God of heaven, 26
 for His mercy endureth for ever !

§ 147. PSALM CXLV.*

AN ALPHABETICAL PSALM¹.*The praise of Jehovah for His mercy and faithfulness.*

A lway will I magnify Thee, O God, my King, and praise Thy name for ever and ever ;	1
B lessed art Thou every day, and praised is Thy name for ever and ever.	2
C onsider how great Jehovah is, He is worthy to be praised, His greatness past finding out.	3
D eclared are Thy works from one generation to another, and Thy praise throughout all generations.	4
E very day will I be talking of Thy worship, Thy glory, Thy praise and wondrous works ;	5
F or men shall speak of the might of Thy marvellous acts, and I will also tell of Thy greatness.	6
G reat is Thy kindness, it shall be had in remembrance, and men shall sing of Thy righteousness.	7
H ow gracious and merciful is Jehovah, long suffering and of great goodness !	8
J ehovah is loving unto every man, and His mercy is over all His works.	9
K nown are Thy praises in Thy works, O Jehovah, and Thy saints give thanks unto Thee.	10
L o, they shew the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power,	11
M aking Thy power and the mightiness of Thy kingdom to be known unto men.	12
N ever shall Thy kingdom be moved, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all ages.	13

* See Introduction, p. 372.

¹ See §§ 61, 130.

- O** Jehovah, how true art Thou in all Thy dealing,
how loving in all Thy works.
- P**rotected of Him are all such as fall, 14
yea, He lifteth up them that are bowed down.
- R**aise thine eyes unto Jehovah, 15
and He shall give thee Thy meat in due season;
- S**hall He not open His hand, 16
and fill all things living with plenteousness?
- T**rust in Jehovah; His ways are true, 17
and holy are all His works.
- V**erily Jehovah is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, 18
yea, unto all such as call upon Him faithfully:
- W**hoso fear Him—He will hear their desire, 19
He will hear their cry and will help them.
- Y**ea, Jehovah preserveth all them that love Him, 20
but scattereth abroad all the ungodly.
- Z**ealously shall my mouth speak the praise of Jehovah, 21
and let all flesh give thanks unto His holy name for ever and
ever.

§ 148. PSALM CXLVI.

IN this Psalm the same exulting thoughts reappear as in the 103rd¹.
The power of kings and princes is as nothing to him whose help is
in the Lord his God².

I. *The weakness of kings.*

Praise Jehovah, O my soul! 1
while I live will I praise Jehovah,
yea, as long as I have any being, I will sing praises unto my
God.

Ver. 13. *O Jehovah—works.* The absence of the 14th letter shews the omission of a
verse, which is thus supplied in the Septuagint.

¹ § 131.

² § 151. cxlix, Introduction.

O put not your trust in princes, 2
 nor in any child of man, for there is no help in him,
 for, when his breath goeth forth, he shall turn again to his earth, 3
 and then all his thoughts perish!

II. *The greatness,*

Blessed is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, 4
 and whose hope is in Jehovah his God,
 who made heaven and earth, 5
 the sea, and all that therein is,
 who keepeth His promise for ever,
 who helpeth them to right that suffer wrong, 6
 who feedeth the hungry.

III. *and goodness of God.*

Jehovah looseth men out of prison, 7
 Jehovah giveth sight unto the blind,
 Jehovah helpeth them that are fallen, 8
 Jehovah loveth the righteous,
 Jehovah careth for the strangers, 9
 He defendeth the fatherless and widow;
 as for the way of the ungodly, He turneth it upside down.
 Jehovah shall be King for evermore, 10
 thy God, O Sion, throughout all generations.

Ver. 10. *thy God, O Sion, i. e. shall be King throughout all generations.*

§ 149. PSALM CXLVII.

A PSALM in praise of God for the preservation of Israel and the complete restoration of Jerusalem. The Psalmist does not merely pour forth his gratitude for an earthly blessing; he is lost in wonder when he contemplates God the Omnipotent Creator and Ruler of the

universe, condescending to guide His people as a shepherd and deigning to dwell with them that await His mercy. This contrast runs throughout the Psalm, which owes much of its beauty and vigour to the rapidity with which the transitions are made.

I. *The praise of God for rebuilding the city,*

<i>O praise Jehovah,</i>	1
for it is a good and pleasant thing to sing praises unto our God,	
yea, a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful!	
Jehovah doth build up Jerusalem,	2
and gather together the outcasts of Israel;	
He healeth those that are broken in heart,	3
and bindeth up their wounds;	
He telleth the number of the stars	4
and calleth them all by their names;	
great is our Lord and great is His power,	5
yea, and His wisdom is infinite;	
Jehovah setteth up the meek,	6
and bringeth the ungodly down to the ground!	

II. *for His works of creation,*

O sing unto Jehovah with thanksgiving,	7
sing praises upon the harp unto our God!	
who covereth the heaven with clouds,	8
who prepareth rain for the earth,	
who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains,	
who giveth fodder unto the cattle,	9
and feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him;	
He hath no pleasure in the strength of an horse,	10
neither delighteth He in any man's legs;	
but Jehovah's delight is in them that fear Him,	11
and put their trust in His mercy!	

Ver. 10. *horse, i. e. cavalry. any man's legs, i. e. infantry.* Cp. Is. xxxi. 1.

III. *and for the restoration of Sion to prosperity.*

Praise Jehovah, O Jerusalem,	12
praise thy God, O Sion,	
for He hath made fast the bars of thy gates,	13
and hath blessed thy children within thee!	
He maketh peace in thy borders,	14
and filleth thee with the flour of wheat;	
He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth,	15
and His word runneth very swiftly;	
He giveth snow like wool,	16
and scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes;	
He casteth forth His ice like morsels;	17
who is able to abide His frost?	
He sendeth out His word, and melteth them,	18
He bloweth with His wind, and the waters flow!	
He sheweth His word unto Jacob,	19
His statutes and ordinances unto Israel;	
He hath not dealt so with any nation,	20
neither have the heathen knowledge of His laws.	

Ver. 18. *them*, i. e. the frost, the snow, and the hoar-frost. God sendeth a thawing wind and the ice is broken up.

§ 150. PSALM XXXIII.

THERE is nothing in the contents of this Psalm to determine the precise occasion for which it was composed: but the absence of superscription¹ shews that it was a late addition to the Psalter. It is however clear that it was designed for a public festival² to celebrate a deliverance from some powerful heathen nation. We can conceive Zerubbabel or Nehemiah after the collapse of the Babylonian empire, striving in such a Psalm as this to arouse the Israelites, after the

¹ See Appendix B.

² *vv.* 1—4 and 12.

Return, to confidence in their invincible King, whose are the heavens and the earth¹, without whom the wisdom of rulers and the strength of armies is powerless², and who watches with sleepless eye over the welfare of 'them that fear' His name³.

A call to praise God,

Rejoice in Jehovah, O ye righteous,	i
for it becometh well the just to be thankful!	
praise Jehovah with the harp,	2
sing praises to Him with the ten-stringed lute!	
sing unto Him a new song,	3
play skilfully with a loud noise!	

I. because He is the God, who made and keepeth the universe,

For the word of Jehovah is true,	4
and all His works are faithful;	
He loveth righteousness and judgment,	5
the earth is full of the goodness of Jehovah;	
by the word of Jehovah were the heavens made,	6
and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth;	
He gathered the waters of the sea together, as it were in a	
bottle,	7
and laid up the deep as in a treasure-house,	
let all the earth fear Jehovah;	8
stand in awe of Him, all ye that dwell in the world!	
for HE spake, and it was done,	9
HE commanded, and it stood fast:	

Ver. 3. *new, i.e.* a song which springs up freshly from a thankful heart. Cp. Lam. iii. 23, 'The Lord's mercies are new every morning.' Is. xlii. 10. *skilfully*. The same expression occurs 1 Sam. xvi. 17.

Ver. 7. *gathered the waters*. An allusion not to a special intervention of Providence, as in Ex. xv. 8, but to the Creation. Cp. § 132. civ. 9, Job xxvi. 10. *bottle*. So Job xxxviii. 37. 'Who can stay the bottles of heaven?' *treasure-house*. Cp. Job xxxviii. 22.

¹ vv. 6-9.

² vv. 10-12; vv. 10-15.

³ vv. 17, 18.

Jehovah bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought, 10
 and maketh the devices of the peoples to be of none effect ;
 the counsel of Jehovah shall endure for ever, 11
 and the thoughts of His heart from generation to generation.

II. and hath blessed His people Israel.

Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah, 12
 and blessed are the folk that He hath chosen to Him to
 be His inheritance !
 Jehovah looked down from heaven, 13
 and beheld all the children of men ;
 from the habitation of His dwelling
 He considereth all them that dwell on the earth ;
 He fashioneth all the hearts of them, 14
 and understandeth all their works :
 there is no king that can be saved by the multitude of an host, 15
 neither is any mighty man delivered by much strength ;
 a horse is counted but a vain thing to save a man, 16
 neither shall he deliver any man by his great strength ;
 behold, the eye of Jehovah is upon them that fear Him, 17
 upon them that hope in His mercy,
 to deliver their soul from death, 18
 and to feed them in the time of dearth.
 Our soul tarrieth patiently for Jehovah, 19
 He is our help and our shield ;
 for our heart rejoiceth in Him, 20
 because we have hoped in His holy name ;
 let Thy merciful kindness, O Jehovah, be upon us, 21
 like as we do put our trust in Thee.

Ver. 16. *horse.* Cp. § 21. xx. 7, and § 149. cxlvii. 10.

§ 151. PSALM CXLIX.

A SONG of victory due to the reawakened enthusiasm consequent on the return from captivity¹. As the pious Jews of the restoration loved to see in their return from Babylon a repetition of the great Exodus of their forefathers from Egypt, so in their struggles with the petty² princes and chieftains around, they would fain dream that they were fighting again the mighty battles of Joshua and Gideon. This devotion to the history of the past was not only inseparable from the revival of the Law, but was itself an important aid to the restoration of the national character and independence. It checked selfishness, kindled enthusiasm, assured the desponding of the special protection of Jehovah. Thus by modelling its life upon the past, the nation at large learned, what their prophets and rulers had never ceased to teach, to live in and for the future also³.

But this devotion to the past had another side. Reverence for their written records degenerated into worship of the letter; and their minds were too often closed to the wider lessons, which connexion with foreign nations had taught⁴, and to the higher view of national relations which had long ago been opened to the Psalmist and the Prophet. The spirit of exclusion and merciless extermination deemed necessary to the national existence⁵ at an earlier period, revived at this later age to which, had they listened to the teaching of the Captivity⁶, it should have been distasteful and abhorrent. It must ever be a matter for regret that the patriotism and devotion embodied in the glowing language of these Psalms should be marred by passages of vindictive exclusiveness. Indeed the use which has been made in later times of this and similar Psalms⁷ shews how easily devotion to the most sacred associations and zeal for the most spiritual religion may become the ministers of human prejudice and passion.

¹ *v.* 4.³ See § 37; § 63 notes.⁵ *v.* 9, *cp.* Deut. vii. 2.⁶ *Cp.* § 100, cxxxvii. and Introduction to Book IV.⁷ *Cp.* Stanley's *Jewish Church*, I. 251, 331, and II. 153.² *v.* 8, *cp.* Neh. vi. 1.⁴ See §§ 35--39, Introduction.

I. *Praise to God,*

O sing unto Jehovah a new song, 1
 let the congregation of saints praise Him!
 let Israel rejoice in Him that made him, 2
 and let the children of Sion be joyful in their king;
 let them praise His name in the dance, 3
 let them sing praises unto Him with tabret and harp!

II. *who hath given His people victory over their enemies,*

For Jehovah hath pleasure in His people, 4
 He maketh glad the poor with victory;
 let the saints be joyful with glory, 5
 let them rejoice in their beds;
 let the praise of God be in their mouth, 6
 and a two-edged sword in their hands:

III. *and will avenge them on the heathen.*

to be avenged of the heathen, 7
 and to rebuke the peoples,
 to bind their kings with chains, 8
 and their nobles with links of iron;
 that, as it is written, they may be avenged of them: 9
 such honour have all His saints.

Ver. 5. *beds.* This verse is best understood by contrasting it with their condition in exile, as described in Hos. vii. 14, 'and they have not cried unto Me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds.'

Ver. 6. Cp. Neh. iv. 17, 18.

§§ 152, 153. PSALMS CXLVIII, CL.

A SUMMONS to all creation to praise Jehovah. With these grand words the Psalter closes¹.

¹ See § 60. i. and Appendix A.

§ 152. PSALM CXLVIII.

I. *The praise of the Creator due from all in heaven,*

O praise Jehovah from the heavens,	1
praise Him in the heights;	
praise Him, all ye angels of His,	2
praise Him, all His host;	
praise Him, sun and moon,	3
praise Him, all ye stars and light;	
praise Him, ye heavens of heavens,	4
and ye waters that are above the heavens;	
let them praise the name of Jehovah,	5
for He commanded, and they were created;	
He hath made them fast for ever and ever,	6
He hath given them a law which shall not be broken!	

II. *in earth,*

Praise Jehovah from the earth,	7
ye dragons and all deeps,	
fire and hail, snow and ice,	8
wind and storm fulfilling His word;	
mountains and all hills,	9
fruitful trees and all cedars;	
beasts and all cattle,	10
worms and feathered fowls;	
kings of the earth and all peoples,	11
princes and all judges of the world;	
young men and maidens,	12
old men and children;	

Ver. 6. Cp. Esther i. 19; ix. 27.

Ver. 11. Cp. Mal. i. 11; § 115. xlvii. 10.

III. *and from His people.*

let them praise the name of Jehovah,
 for His name only is excellent,
 and His praise above heaven and earth;
 and He hath exalted the horn of His people, 13
 all His saints praise Him,
 even the children of Israel, even the people that serveth Him!

Ver. 13. *horn*, § 38. lxxv. 3.

§ 153. PSALM CL.

Praise God in His sanctuary,	1
praise Him in the firmament of His power!	
praise Him in His noble acts,	2
praise Him according to His excellent greatness!	
praise Him in the sound of the trumpet,	3
praise Him upon the lute and harp!	
praise Him in the cymbals and dances,	4
praise Him upon the loud cymbals!	
let everything that hath breath praise Jehovah!	

END OF THE PSALMS.

SUPPLEMENT
OF
HEBREW LYRICS.

§§ 154—162.

- § 154. Gen. iv. 23, 24. Song of Lamech.
- § 155. Exodus xv. Song of Moses and Miriam.
- § 156. Judges v. Song of Deborah.
- § 157. 1 Samuel II. 1—10.
- § 158. Jonah II.
- § 159. Isaiah xxxviii. 10—20. Psalm of Hezekiah.
- § 160. Deuteronomy xxxii. 1—43.
- § 161. Habakkuk III.
- § 162. Lamentations I—v.

SUPPLEMENT OF HEBREW LYRICS.

§§ 154—162.

CONTAINING

§ 154. Genesis iv. 23, 24, Song of Lamech; § 155. Exodus xv, Song of Moses and Miriam; § 156. Judges v, Song of Deborah; § 157. 1 Sam. ii. 1—10; § 158. Jonah ii; § 159. Isaiah xxxviii. 10—20, Psalm of Hezekiah; § 160. Deuteronomy xxxii. 1—43; § 161. Habakkuk iii; § 162. Lamentations i—v.

§ 154. GENESIS IV. 23, 24.

THE SONG OF LAMECH ON THE DISCOVERY OF THE SWORD.

Adah and Zillah, hear my voice! 23
ye wives of Lamech, give ear unto my speech!
now will I slay the man that woundeth me,
and the young man that doth me hurt;
if Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, 24
so shall Lamech be avenged seventy and sevenfold.

§ 155. EXODUS XV.

THE SONG OF MOSES AND MIRIAM.

Prelude.

*Sing unto Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously;
the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.*

I.

I will sing unto Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously, 1
the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea!

Prelude. This is taken from ver. 21; being Miriam's answer to the early portion of the song, as sung by Moses and the children of Israel,

Jehovah is my strength and my song; 2
 for He was my salvation;
 He is my God and I will praise Him,
 my father's God and I will exalt Him;
 Jehovah is mighty in war: 3
 Jehovah is His name:
 Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea: 4
 his chosen captains were drowned in the Red sea;
 the depths have covered them, 5
 they sank to the bottom as a stone.

II.

Thy right hand, O Jehovah, is glorious in power, 6
 Thy right hand, O Jehovah, hath dashed in pieces the enemy;
 and in the greatness of Thy Majesty hast Thou overthrown them that
 rose up against Thee; 7
 Thou sendest forth Thy wrath and consumest them as stubble;
 for with the blast of Thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, 8
 the floods stood upright as an heap,
 and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea;
 the enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil,
 'my desire shall be satisfied upon them. 9
 'I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.'
 Thou didst blow with Thy wind; the sea covered them; 10
 they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

III.

Who is like unto Thee, O Jehovah, among the gods? 11
 who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness,
 fearful in praises, doing wonders?
 Thou stretchedst out Thy right hand; the earth swallowed them; 12
 * * * * *
 Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people, which Thou hast 13
 redeemed,
 Thou hast guided them in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation.

IV.

The nations heard; they tremble; 14
 terror took hold on the inhabitants of Palestine;
 then were the dukes of Edom amazed, 15
 as for the mighty men of Moab, trembling taketh hold of them
 all the inhabitants of Canaan are melted away;
 fear and dread fall upon them, 16
 by the greatness of Thine arm they are as still as a stone,
 till the people pass over, O Jehovah,
 till the people pass over, which Thou hast purchased;
 Thou bringest them in and plantest them on the hill of Thine 17
 inheritance,
 in the place, O Jehovah, which Thou hast made for Thee to
 dwell in,
 in the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established.
 Jehovah is King for ever and ever. 18

Ver. 17. *sanctuary, i.e.* Shiloh. This allusion shews that the original poem must have been remoulded for a Passover Ode to be sung at Shiloh, after the people were already settled in the land. For the living interest in their past history, which induced the Jews to join the old to the new, compare the 60th Psalm; and the account of *Composite Psalms* in Appendix A (2).

§ 156. JUDGES V.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH.

I.

Prelude.

Forasmuch as the leaders led in Israel, 2
forasmuch as the people willingly offered themselves,
praise Jehovah!

x. *Deborah recalleth the glories of the Exodus of old,*

Hear, O ye kings! give ear, O ye princes! 3
 I, even I, will sing unto Jehovah,
 I will sing praises to Jehovah, God of Israel,

Ver. 3. *kings—princes, i.e.* of Canaan, enemies of Israel.

Jehovah, when Thou wentest forth from Seir, 4
 when Thou marchedst out of the field of Edom,
 the earth trembled and the heavens dropped,
 the clouds also dropped water;
 the mountains melted before Jehovah, 5
 even that Sinai before Jehovah, God of Israel.

2. *and how from the evil times of the early Judges deliverance came;*

In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath, 6
 in the days of Jael the highways kept holiday,
 and the travellers walked through byways;
 the leaders kept holiday, yea they kept holiday in Israel, 7
 until that I, Deborah, arose,—
 that I arose, a mother in Israel.
 They chose new judges; 8
 then were the gates of the enemy taken,
 yet was not a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel.

3. *she calleth on Israel to give thanks for the same.*

My heart saith to the captains of Israel, 9
 and to them that offered themselves willingly, among the people,
 'praise ye Jehovah!'
 sing praises, ye that ride on white asses, 10
 ye that sit in chariots,
 and ye that walk on foot, sing praises!

Vv. 4, 5. Deborah relates to the enemy the manifestations of God's power as Lord of Hosts, as He was leading forth His people from the south, from *Edom* and mount *Seir*, the eastern boundary of Edom, to take possession of the land of promise. *melted*, i.e. in terror at the storm.

Ver. 6. *Jael* is the name of a judge not known, and is not to be confused with the wife of Heber the Kenite of the same name in ver. 24.

Ver. 8. *judges*, literally gods; cp. note on § 53. iviii. 1.

with the noise of the singers by the wells of water, 11
there let them rehearse the righteous acts of Jehovah,
the righteous acts of His leading in Israel.

Chorus.

Then besieged they the gates—the people of Jehovah!

II.

Chorus.

Awake, awake, Deborah! 12
awake, awake, utter the song!
Arise, Barak! lead on thy captives, thou son of Abinoam!

1. *Deborah telleth of the gathering;*

Then a remnant of the nobles, of the people, did go down, 13
Jehovah Himself, with the captains, did go down;
from Ephraim did they go—they whose roots are in Amalek— 14
after thee, Benjamin, among thy people,—
from Machir did the captains go down,
and from Zebulon they that hold the staff of judgment,
and the princes in Issachar, like Deborah,— 15
and Issachar, even as Barak,—
even so did his feet bear him down into the valley.

2. *of the recreants;*

By the streams of Reuben there are great purposes of heart! 16
O why abodest thou by the sheepfolds to hear the pipings of the
flocks?

by the streams of Reuben there are great searchings of heart!

Ver. 11. *wells of water.* She calls on the herdsmen staying away with their flocks to join in the song of triumph.

Ver. 14. *whose roots are in Amalek, i. e.* whose inheritance is in Mount Amalek, in Ephraim, cp. Judges xii. 15. *Machir, i. e.* Manasseh, cp. Joshua xvii. 1, meaning western Manasseh, just as Gilead (ver. 17) means eastern Manasseh.

Ver. 15. *like Deborah—as Barak, i. e.* with the same zeal as their leaders. *valley, i. e.* from Mount Tabor, where they had taken up their position, so as to be secure against the chariots of Jabin, down to the battle in the *valley* of Esdraelon. *his, i. e.* Issachar's.

Ver. 16. *purposes—searchings.* Reuben had first good *purposes*, then hesitation and *searchings* whether he would go or not.

Gilead abideth beyond Jordan, 17
 and Dan—why tarrieth he by the ships?
 Asher continueth by the sea shore,
 and abideth in his havens!
 Zebulon is a people that jeopardeth their lives unto death, 18
 and Naphtali, that dwelleth on the heights.

3. *of the battle;*

The kings came and fought,
 then fought the kings of Canaan, 19
 at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo;
 they took no spoil of silver:
 the stars fought from heaven, 20
 the stars from their courses
 fought against Sisera;
 the torrent of Kishon swept them away, 21
 that torrent of war, the torrent Kishon.

Chorus.

Up, O my soul; be thou lifted up with strength.

4. *of the flight;*

Then stamped the hoofs of the horses, 22
 with the gallopings, the gallopings of the mighty ones;

Ver. 19. *Taanach.* The kings of Canaan came down from Harosheth and encamped with their chariots of iron in the great plain of Esdraelon. Into this plain runs the long promontory of *Taanach*, from which Deborah watched the encampment of the foe, and from which she saw still encamped on Mount Tabor the little host which was so soon to sweep down into the valley and destroy them.

Ver. 20. *from their courses* the stars came down; *i. e.* the elements left their usual courses to aid in the destruction. So at Bethhoron, the sun and the moon stayed their course; compare in modern times, how at Cressy the rain and cold came on out of course and disabled the enemy's archers and swordsmen.

Ver. 21. *Kishon.* As their flight was towards the north, they had to cross the *Kishon*, usually a dry bed, then a swollen torrent. This and the morass which was formed by the waters proved the destruction of the chariots.

‘Curse ye Meroz,’ saith the angel of Jehovah, 23
 ‘curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;
 ‘because they came not to the help of Jehovah,
 ‘to the help of Jehovah among his captains.’
 Blessed above women be Jael, 24
 the wife of Heber the Kenite;
 blessed may she be above women of the tent!

5. *of the destruction of the captain;*

He asked water, she gave him milk, 25
 yea, curded milk in a lordly dish;
 she put her hand to the pin of the tent, 26
 and her right hand to the workman’s hammer,
 and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote in pieces his head,
 she brake it in pieces, she smote through his temples :
 at her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down, 27
 at her feet he bowed, he fell;
 where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

6. *and of the bewilderment of his home at Harosheth.*

Through the window she looked out afar and cried— 28
 the mother of Sisera through the lattice;
 ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming,
 ‘why tarry the wheels of his chariots?’
 the wise ones of her ladies make answer, 29
 —but she repeateth to herself her words—

Ver. 23. *Meroz*, a city by which the rout passed and which gave no help in the pursuit.
 Hence the curse.

Ver. 24. *women of the tent*, i.e. Bedouin Arab women.

Ver. 29. *her words*, i.e. of doubt and fear in ver. 28. The mother’s instinct guesses the cause, and is not deluded by the ladies, who thought only of victory and spoil.

‘have they not sped? are they not dividing the prey? 30
 ‘to every man a damsel or two?
 ‘to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours,
 of embroidery,
 ‘one of divers colours, two of embroidery for the neck of
 the queen?’

Chorus.

So let all Thine enemies perish, O Jehovah! 31
but they that love Him are as the sun when he goeth
forth in his might.

Ver. 30. *queen*. The Hebrew word for *queen* differs from that for ‘spoil’ only by one letter. It is impossible to make sense with ‘spoil’ except by the insertion of several words, a much greater alteration than the substitution of one letter for another.

§ 157. I SAM. II. I—10.

A PSALM OF DELIVERANCE.

ONE of the most perplexing characteristics of the Biblical writings is the freedom of reference, with which passages are applied to illustrate circumstances entirely different from those for which they were originally intended. Some striking instances of this are to be found in the growth of the titles of the Psalms: thus the 137th, which is anonymous in the Hebrew text, was ascribed by the Greek translators to David; while another compiler, struck by the incongruity of making David weep by the waters of Babylon, referred the same Psalm to Jeremiah¹. The 138th Psalm is assigned in the same way to David, as well as to Haggai and Zechariah. So proverbs which were added by the ‘men of Hezekiah, king of Judah,’ are still classed among the Proverbs of Solomon. In the same way the Hymn of Jonah² is referred to his wonderful escape from the fish’s belly, though there is no allusion to such a circumstance, the application to Jonah having been suggested by the words ‘out of the belly of hell cried I.’

¹ See Appendix B (1).

² § 158.

The reference of these ten verses to Hannah has been noted as one of the most curious instances¹ of this habit of the Hebrew compilers. It has been well said by the critic in the Bible Dictionary², that 'deducting the general allusion in the 5th verse to the barren having born seven, there is nothing in the song peculiarly applicable to the supposed circumstances, and far the greater portion of it seems to be a song of triumph for deliverance from powerful enemies in battles³.' By some it has been referred to the victory of David over Goliath and the Philistines, but it seems rather to celebrate the change of a dynasty, and the victory of God's anointed king⁴ over some pretenders to the throne⁵.

I.

My heart rejoiceth in Jehovah, I
mine horn is exalted in Jehovah,
my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies :
because I rejoice in Thy saving help :
[there is none holy as Jehovah : for there is none beside Thee ; 2
neither is there any rock like our God :]

Ver. 1. *horn is exalted, i. e.* with pride : a metaphor from beasts carrying their heads high when in full strength and armed against a foe : cp. § 38. lxxv. 5, note. The joy first rests quietly in the heart, then appears in the carriage of the body, and finally finds expression in words. *enlarged*, 'opened wide:' there is no longer any need for keeping silence through fear. *saving help*, or 'victory.'

Ver. 2. Ewald thinks this verse has come in from a gloss or parallel passage quoted at the side: it breaks the progress of the stanza from 'my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies' to the direct address in the words 'talk no more so exceeding proudly;' it also interferes with the arrangement of the strophes.

¹ For other instances, cp. the reference of the 127th Psalm (§ 94) to Solomon, because it begins 'Except Jehovah build the house,' and of the 63rd Psalm (§ 63) to David in the wilderness, because the words 'a dry and thirsty land' are taken literally. See Appendix B (2).

² Vol. III. pp. 1130, 1131.

³ *ps.* 3, 4, 6, 10.

⁴ *ps.* 10.

⁵ It must be remembered that the assignment of poetical writings to particular occasions must in all cases be the work of the compiler, and not a part of those original records to which the compiler frequently refers. Thus in a case where we are able to compare two versions of the same narrative, viz. in the historical chapters of Kings inserted between the two divisions of the Book of Isaiah, we find that the psalm of Hezekiah, not found in Kings, appears in such a way as to shew that the original narrative has been disturbed to insert it. See § 159.

talk no more so exceeding proudly, 3
 let not arrogancy come out of your mouth!
 for Jehovah is a God of knowledge
 and by Him actions are weighed.

II.

The bows of the mighty are broken, 4
 and they that stumbled are girded with strength;
 they that were full have hired themselves out for bread; 5
 and they that were hungry keep holiday;
 so that the barren woman hath born seven,
 and she that hath many children is waxed feeble:
 Jehovah killeth and maketh alive, 6
 He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up.

III.

Jehovah maketh poor and maketh rich, 7
 He bringeth low and lifteth up;
 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, 8
 and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,
 to set them among princes,
 and to make them inherit the throne of glory:
 for the pillars of the earth are Jehovah's,
 and He hath set the world upon them.

IV.

He will keep the feet of His holy ones: 9
 but the wicked do vanish in darkness,
 for by strength doth no man prevail:

Ver. 3. *weighed*, *i.e.* He weighs your pride in the balance and finds it represents nothing of the real power of nobleness and right. Cp. § 32. lxii. 9.

Ver. 8. *poor*, here in sense of 'weak' or 'oppressed' (cp. Glossary), not the same word as in the last verse. *pillars of the earth*, *i.e.* mountains. See § 4. xxiv. 2.

the adversaries of Jehovah shall be broken to pieces,
 out of heaven shall He thunder upon them;
 Jehovah shall judge the ends of the earth,
 and He shall give strength unto His king,
 and exalt the horn of His Anointed.

§ 158. JONAH II.

THE THANKSGIVING OF JONAH.

THIS beautiful hymn, which is well worthy of a place in the Psalter, has been preserved to us by the compiler of the Book of Jonah. The Book of Jonah is quite different from the rest of the prophetic books: they in the main contain the utterances of the prophets whose name they bear; this book is the biography of the prophet. The story is treated by the writer in a didactic spirit, for the purpose of teaching some of the great lessons of the Captivity, the efficacy of prayer, the happiness of spiritual communion with God, and the nature of His government over the heathen. It is this didactic purpose which gives the book its moral and prophetic character. The great truth that fear of God and a change of heart brings deliverance under all circumstances is shewn, first in the case of the sailors, then in that of Jonah himself, and thirdly in that of the city of Nineveh. The last chapter gives the key to the whole in a brief allegory. If man grieves over the withering of a tree, shall not God grieve over the loss of those whom He has endowed with a part of His own spiritual nature?

With a freedom of reference, which is characteristic of the living interest which the Hebrews took in the earlier records of their history, the hymn is inserted by the compiler as the lyrical expression of the feelings of Jonah in his peril. The hymn itself is of much earlier date than the rest of the book. It dates from the monarchy, resembles in expression several of the Psalms of that period¹, and is moulded on that great Hymn of Thanksgiving which David has left us in the 18th Psalm².

¹ See §§ 28—30 and Introduction to Book II.

² § 12.

I.

I cried out of mine affliction unto Jehovah, and He heard me ; 2
 out of the belly of hell cried I and Thou heardest my voice !
 for Thou didst cast me into the deep, into the midst of the 3
 seas, and the floods compassed me about ;
 all Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me :
 then I said, 'I am cast off from the sight of Thine eyes !' 4
 yet I will look again toward Thy holy Temple.

II.

'The waters compassed me about, even to the soul, the depths 5
 closed me round about ;
 the weeds were wrapped about my head ;
 I went down to the bottoms of the mountains, 6
 the bars of the earth were behind me for ever :
 yet didst Thou bring up my life from the pit,
 O Jehovah, my God !

III.

When my soul fainted within me, I remembered Jehovah ; 7
 and my prayer came in unto Thee into Thy holy Temple ;
 they that hold to lying vanities cast away their own salvation : 8
 but I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving, 9
 I will pay that that I have vowed !
 Salvation is of Jehovah.

Ver. 2. *belly of hell*, or 'jaws of death.' This vivid expression may have seemed to make the hymn specially appropriate to the story of Jonah : see Introduction.

Ver. 3. *all Thy billows—over me* occurs again § 67. xlii. 9.

Ver. 4. *cast—eyes* occurs again § 57. xxxi. 24.

Ver. 5. *waters—soul* occurs again § 73. lxix. 1.

weeds, *i. e.* seaweed, wrapped about the head of the drowning man.

Ver. 6. *bars of the earth were* [closed] *behind me for ever*, *i. e.* I was shut out from the land of the living.

Ver. 8. *lying vanities*, *i. e.* gods that are no gods, § 160. Deut. xxxii. 21 ; vain idols : quoted in § 57. xxxi. 7. *cast away their own salvation*, *i. e.* cut themselves off from the saving hand of God.

§ 159. ISAIAH XXXVIII. 10—20.

THE PSALM OF HEZEKIAH.

IN triumphant songs Psalmists had celebrated the destruction of Sennacherib¹ and the repulse of the Assyrian invasion: but scarcely had these strains died away, when a severe illness struck down the king who was endeared to the heart of the nation by a common peril and a common deliverance. The king himself feels a horrible dread of death come over him. What is it to him that he has seen the invader driven from his walls, what is it to him that God should promise to continue to deliver the city from the king of Assyria²? He is not to enjoy the 'quietness³' of his days: for him the time of 'peace and stability⁴' is to be a vain hope; the failure of his royal line⁵, separation from his people, separation from his God, utter annihilation, 'the pit of destruction,'—all these await him. The feelings of awe with which even the most religious Israelites of that time⁶ regarded the approach of death are set forth by Hezekiah in the psalm⁷ with which he celebrates his unhopèd for recovery. Joyfully he welcomes the respite at God's hand, and returns with words of thanksgiving to mingle with the crowds of worshippers in the Temple, and to look forward to the story of his recovery being handed down through future generations to the glory of God⁸.

I.

I said, now in the quietness of my days I shall go to the gates 10
of the grave;

I am deprived of the residue of my years;

Ver. 10. *quietness of my days, i.e.* in the height of my prosperity after the repulse of Sennacherib.

¹ See §§ 35—39, Introduction.

² 2 Kings xx. 5.

³ Is. xxxviii. 10.

⁴ Is. xxxix. 8.

⁵ A tradition preserved in Jos. Ant. x. 2 § 1 (quoted by Stanley).

⁶ Compare also the other psalms of the Monarchy, as § 26. vi; § 28. xxx.

⁷ The historical chapters, Isaiah xxxvi—xxxix, in which this psalm occurs, are extracted with slight changes from the 2nd book of Kings (xviii—xx). The psalm itself however does not occur there, and the historical narrative was arranged to form a setting to it. The Psalm is thus entitled: 'The Song of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick and was recovered of his sickness.' The Hebrew word here used to designate the poem differs only in the final letter from the term *Michtam* used in the superscription of 6 Psalms; see Appendix B (4).

⁸ v. 19.

I said, I shall not see Jehovah, 11
 even Jehovah in the land of the living;
 I shall behold man no more among them that dwell in silence;
 my dwelling is broken off, and removed from me as a shepherd's tent;
 I have cut off like a weaver my life; 12
 He will cut me off as a thread from the thrum;
 from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me;
 I reckoned, 'by morning as a lion 13
 'so will He break all my bones;
 'from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me;'
 like a swallow, or a crane, so did I chatter; 14
 I did moan as a dove, mine eyes did fail with looking upward;
 O Jehovah, I am oppressed: undertake for me.

II.

What shall I say? He hath promised unto me, and He hath 15
 performed it;
 I shall go to the end of my days for all the bitterness of my
 soul;
 O Lord, by these things men live, 16
 and in these things is the life of my spirit;
 even so dost Thou recover me and makest me to live;

Ver. 11. *silence*, literally, vacation, *i. e.* the inaction and silence of the grave, cp. ver. 18. So § 5. lxxxviii. 4, 18, 'mine acquaintance are they that dwell in the grave;' and § 26. vi. 5, 'who shall give Thee thanks in the grave?' *my dwelling is broken off*, *i. e.* I die, my place in life is removed as the nomad's tent. *shepherd's tent*, throughout the prophets 'shepherd' of the Bible means 'nomad.'

Ver. 12. *weaver—thrum*. The thrum is that by which the threads of the warp are fastened to the loom; here the king's life is said to be cut off from the *thrum*, as a *weaver* cuts off his work, when finished. Cp. *Mids. Night's Dream*, v. 1, 'O fates, come, come; cut thread and thrum.'

He will—make an end of me; these are his thoughts in his sickness, see v. 11, 'I said,' *from day even to night*, *i. e.* in the short space of a single day; so in Job, with the same meaning (iv. 20), 'they are destroyed from morning till evening.' Cp. § 34. xc. 6, 'in the morning it is green, it groweth up, in the evening it is dried up and withered.'

Ver. 14. *undertake for me*, an expression of plaintive yearning that God would take his part.

Ver. 15. *for all the bitterness*, *i. e.* notwithstanding all, or for the bitterness [being passed], viz. that bitterness which he experienced during his sickness. The Psalmist seems here to repeat God's promise to him of a longer life.

Ver. 16. *these (things)*, *i. e.* God's promise and its fulfilment.

behold, for my health I had great bitterness; 17
 but Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of
 destruction,
 for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back;
 for the grave doth not praise Thee, 18
 death doth not celebrate Thee,
 they that go down into the pit wait not for Thy truth;
 the living, the living, he praiseth Thee, as I do this day, 19
 the father to the son shall make known Thy truth.

III.

Jehovah is there to help me; 20
 therefore will we sing my songs to stringed instruments,
 all the days of our life in the House of Jehovah.

Ver. 17. *I had great bitterness*, literally, 'it became bitter unto me,' *i.e.* trouble came upon me, not ending in my death but in my life. *in love*, literally, 'Thou hast loved my life from the pit of corruption.'

Ver. 18. *grave, i.e.* Sheol, Hades. For the thought of the impossibility of continuing to praise God after death, cp. § 26. vi. 5, 'for in death no man remembereth Thee, and who shall give Thee thanks in the grave?' And again in the 30th, another psalm probably by the same author as the 6th (§ 28. xxx. 10), 'Shall the dust give thanks unto Thee, or shall it declare Thy truth?' So again § 58. lxxxviii. 11. Contrast with this the idea of seeing God face to face after death, as given in §§ 64—66. xvi, xvii, xlix, and Introduction. *truth, i.e.* the fulfilment of Thy promised deliverance.

Ver. 19. Hezekiah, who according to Josephus was at this time childless, now looked forward to the probability of perpetuating his line.

Ver. 20. *stringed instruments*, the harp and psaltery, used in the Temple services. For instances of such choral psalms in which the king may have joined, compare the later psalms, §§ 101, 102.

§ 160. DEUT. XXXII. 1—43.

THE more recent version of the Law, comprised in the book of Deuteronomy, formed the authoritative basis of the reformation under Josiah and exerted the strongest influence on Hebrew life and literature. In one of the last chapters of the book we find this Psalm, which must have had a special bearing on the hopes and fears of the time. It appeals to the Mosaic age¹ as a time long past, and

¹ *vv.* 7—18.

describes a generation far fallen from the loyalty and happiness of that time. Degeneracy and presumption had taken the place of faith. Faith, the basis of the national life, was gone and the people had fallen a prey to heathen conquerors. These were undoubtedly the Assyrians.

The Psalmist begins by singing the faithfulness of God, but breaks off as he thinks of the ingratitude of the people, and calls them to listen to the lessons of the past. The very excess of God's mercy in giving them a land flowing with milk and honey, had seduced them into a rebellion which He was constrained to punish for awhile. Then he looks with prophetic eye into the future and declares that God will stay His hand and that the Messianic hopes shall yet be fulfilled¹.

I. A call to remember God's justice;

Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak ;	1
and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth ;	
my doctrine shall drop as the rain,	2
my speech shall distil as the dew,	
as the small rain upon the tender herb,	
and as the showers upon the grass ;	
because I will publish the name of Jehovah ;	3
—ascribe ye greatness unto our God ;—	
He is the rock, His work is perfect,	4
for all His ways are righteousness,	
a God of truth and without iniquity,	
just and right is He ;	
they have dealt corruptly against Him, they are not His chil-	5
dren, a reproach unto themselves,	
they are a perverse and crooked generation ;	
do ye thus requite Jehovah,	6
O foolish people and unwise ?	
is not He thy father that hath created thee,	
hath He not made thee and established thee ?	

¹ See Ewald, *History of the People of Israel*, i. 124, in English translation.

remember the days of old,
consider the years of many generations;
ask thy father and he will shew thee,
thy elders, and they will tell thee.

7

II. *His fatherly goodness to His people so long as they were faithful.*

When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, 8
when He separated the children of men,
He set the bounds of the tribes
according to the number of the children of Israel;
for the portion of Jehovah is His people, 9
Jacob is the lot of His inheritance;
He found him in a desert land, 10
and in the waste howling wilderness,
He compassed him about, He cared for him,
He kept him as the apple of His eye;
as an eagle stirreth up her nest, 11
fluttereth over her young,
spreadeth abroad her wings,
taketh them, beareth them on her wings,
so Jehovah alone did lead him, 12
and there was no strange god with him;
He made him ride on the high places of the land, 13
that he might eat the increase of the field;
and He made him to suck honey out of the rock,
and oil out of the flinty rock,
butter of kine and milk of sheep, 14
with fat of lambs, with rams, the breed of Bashan, and with goats,
with the fat of kidneys of wheat;
and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.

Ver. 11. *her nest, i. e. her nestlings.*

Ver. 13. *ride on the high places, i. e. gave him possession of the heights which command the country.*

Ver. 14. *fat of kidneys of wheat, i. e. wheat richer than other wheat as kidney-fat is richer than other fat.*

III. *Their frowardness,*

But Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked : 15
 thou art waxen fat, yea grown thick, and covered with fatness ;
 then he forsook God which made him,
 and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation ;
 they provoked Him to jealousy with strange gods, 16
 with abominations provoked they Him to anger ;
 they sacrificed unto devils which were not God, 17
 to gods whom they knew not,
 to new gods that came from round about them,
 whom your fathers feared not ;
 of the rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, 18
 and hast forgotten God that bore thee :
 and when Jehovah saw it He abhorred them, 19
 His sons and His daughters in His anger ;
 and He said, I will hide my face from them, 20
 I will see what their end shall be,
 for they are a very froward generation,
 children in whom is no faithfulness.
 they have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God, 21
 they have provoked Me to anger with their vain gods,
 and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people,
 I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

IV. *and its chastisement.*

For a fire is kindled in Mine anger, 22
 and burneth unto the lowest hell,
 and consumeth the earth with her increase,
 and setteth on fire the foundations of the mountains ;
 I will heap mischiefs upon them, 23
 I will spend Mine arrows upon them ;
 they shall be consumed with hunger and devoured with burning heat, 24
 and with bitter destruction :

Ver. 15. *Jeshurun*, the 'righteous' or 'justified,' a name of endearment given to Israel ;
 cp Is. xliv. 2, 'Fear not, O Jacob, My servant, and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.'

Ver. 21. *vain gods*, literally, 'transitoriness,' 'vanity.' See § 158. Jonah ii. 8, note.

I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them,
 with the poison of serpents of the dust;
 the sword shall destroy them from without, 25
 and terror within their chambers;
 both the young man and the virgin,
 the suckling also with the man of grey hairs;
 I said, I would scatter them into corners, 26
 I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men,
 were it not that I feared the reproach of the enemy, 27
 lest their adversaries should understand it amiss,
 lest they should say, 'It is our own high hand,
 'and not Jehovah who hath done all this.'

V. *The greatness of God's power,*

For they are a nation void of counsel, 28
 neither is there any understanding in them;
 if they were wise, then would they understand this, 29
 they would consider their latter end!
 How should one chase a thousand, 30
 and two put ten thousand to flight,
 except their rock had sold them,
 and Jehovah had given them up?
 For their rock is not as our rock, 31
 even our enemies themselves being judges;
 for their vine is of the vine of Sodom, 32
 and of the fields of Gomorrah;
 their grapes are grapes of gall,
 their clusters are bitter;
 their wine is the poison of dragons, 33
 and the deadly venom of asps.
 As not this laid up in store with Me, 34
 and sealed up among My treasures?
 to Me belongeth vengeance; I will repay; 35
 their foot shall slide in due time:

for the day of our calamity is at hand,
and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

VI. *and His ultimate deliverance of His people.*

- For Jehovah establisheth the right for His people, 36
and taketh compassion on His servants,
when He seeth that their power is gone,
and that there is none left, slave or free.
And He shall say, *Where are their gods,* 37
their rock, in whom they trusted,
which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, 38
and drank the wine of their drink-offerings?
let them rise up and help you,
and be your protection;
see now, that I, even I, am He, 39
and there is no God beside Me;
I kill and I make alive,
I wound and I heal:
neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand;
for I lift up My hand to heaven, 40
and say, As I live for ever,
—if I whet My glittering sword, 41
and if Mine hand take hold on judgment,—
I will render vengeance to Mine enemies,
and will reward them that hate Me;
I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, 42
and My sword shall devour flesh,
and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives,
from the head of princes of the enemy.
Rejoice O ye tribes, His people, 43
for He will avenge the blood of His servants,
and will render vengeance to His adversaries,
and will be merciful unto His land and to His people.

Ver. 36. *slave or free*, literally, 'shut up or left free,' a common expression in the books of Kings, indicating that all alike had perished; though the expressions 'shut up,' 'left free,' admit of two interpretations, viz. 'young,' 'grown up,' and 'slave,' 'free.'

§ 161. HABAKKUK III.

THE PSALM OF HABAKKUK.

THREE great invasions have left their traces in the lyric poetry of the Hebrews; the Assyrian invasion of Sennacherib¹, the Scythian invasion in the reign of Josiah², and those inroads of the Chaldæans³ which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The terror⁴ which the first of these Chaldæan inroads spread among the Jews is depicted in the writings of Habakkuk. The Chaldæans⁵ are there depicted as a wild marauding tribe, strong in cavalry, somewhat like the Scythian⁶ hordes who but lately had terrified the city.

¹ See §§ 35—37; xlv, xlviii, lxxvi. and 1 Kings xxii. 48.

² See § 54. lix. and Jer. iv—vi.

³ Hab. i. and 1 Kings xxiv. 2.

⁴ Hab. i. 6—10, 'For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and restless people, which marcheth through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs. They are terrible and dreadful; judgment and dignity go forth before them; their horses are swifter than leopards, and sharper than evening wolves; and their horsemen spread themselves afar, they fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat; they come up everyone for violence: their faces are set upon destruction, and they gather captives as the sand; and they scoff at kings, and the princes are a scorn unto them, and they deride every stronghold; and they heap dust, and take it' (*i.e.* they throw up earth-works and take the stronghold). *destruction*, literally, east wind, used figuratively as in Hosea xii. 2.

⁵ The word 'Chaldæan' appears originally to have applied only to a part of the Babylonian empire, and it is not till later that it became equivalent to 'Babylonian.' The change may have dated from the time when Nabopolassar, himself probably of Chaldæan origin, shook off the yoke of Assyria, and set up an independent kingdom, which was henceforth called indifferently Chaldæa, or Babylon. Thus it is that his son Nebuchadnezzar is styled in Chronicles 'the king of the Chaldæans' (2 Chron. xxxvi. 17). The word is used in Habakkuk in the less extended signification; the description of these invaders given in the first chapter (see note 4) seems to carry us back to the time before the accession of Nabopolassar. In fact, the whole tone of the prophet seems more suited to the religious revival of Josiah than to the time of his son Jehoiaquim, in whose reign occurred the first Chaldæan invasion mentioned in the historical books (1 Kings xxiv. 2). The nomad tribe which appears here were no doubt a few years later incorporated with the more peaceful inhabitants of the vast alluvial plain, which was to form the Chaldæan or Babylonian empire, and helped to strengthen their hands in the struggle for independence against Nineveh. We cannot tell whether the occasion mentioned by Habakkuk was their journey southwards, or whether they had been driven once more into motion by the 'restless' spirit of their nation (Hab. i. 6): but in either case it is not hard to suppose that they made an earlier appearance before the walls of Jerusalem than that recorded in the Book of Kings.

⁶ Hence it has even been suggested that the Chaldæans here mentioned are the same as the Scythians, and that the remains of that nation were incorporated in the Babylonian empire. See Stanley, *Jewish Church*, 2nd series, p. 503.

This fearful invasion was in the prophet's eyes a punishment for the national sin, a punishment that involved the guilty and the innocent alike. In his perplexity he is vouchsafed an oracle: 'Behold he whose heart is lifted up within him shall not have his path straight before him. But the just shall live by his faith (*i.e.* faithfulness)¹.' The hope which this promise kindled in the Prophet 'transformed him for the moment into the Psalmist; the ancient poetic fervour of Deborah is kindled within him; the great days of old rise before him²; and in that last outburst³ of Hebrew poetry, the wild struggle is at length calmed; a deep peace settles down over the close of the life which had begun in such a tempest of doubt and agitation⁴.' This poem has evidently been used as a Psalm, for it still retains the musical directions⁵ according to which it was sung. In fact it is exactly like those of the Psalter, and therefore cannot be omitted in any complete collection of Hebrew psalms; while for its own sake we are bound to include 'a composition unrivalled for boldness of conception, sublimity of thought, and majesty of diction⁶,' 'the Pindaric ode of Habakkuk⁷.'

The Prophet calleth on God to fulfil his word and appear in majesty.

O Jehovah, I heard Thy speech, and was afraid; 2
 O Jehovah, revive Thy work in the course of the years,
 in the course of the years make it to be known,
 in wrath remember mercy!

Ver. 2. *Thy speech*, *i.e.* the oracle given to the prophet as recorded in chap. ii. 3, 4. 'The vision is yet for the appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, he whose heart is lifted up within him shall not have his path straight; but the just shall live by his faith.' *it, i.e.* Thy work.

¹ Hab. ii. 4.

² iii. 2—15.

³ iii. 17—19.

⁴ Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 2nd series, p. 497.

⁵ This psalm is styled a 'prayer,' as was the 102nd Psalm; it is to be sung 'to dithyrambic measures' and is marked 'for leading with music;' see Appendix B (3), (4); the occurrence of musical directions in the superscription and of *Selah* in vv. 3, 9, 13 shew that this Psalm was set to music and used in Temple service.

⁶ Aldis Wright in *Bib. Dict.* 'Habakkuk.'

⁷ Ewald.

The People recalleth how God of old came forth in triumph from Egypt.

I.

God cometh from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran ; 3
 His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His
 praise ;
 and brightness cometh from Him as the light, bright beams 4
 from His side,
 and there was the veil of His majesty ;
 before Him went the pestilence, 5
 and plagues of fire after His footsteps !

2.

He stood and shook the earth, He beheld and drave asunder 6
 the nations ;
 and the everlasting mountains were scattered,
 the hills of old did bow, and the ways of old before Him :
 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction, 7
 the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

Ver. 3. *Teman*, *i. e.* the South, meaning the southern part of Edom. Cp. Jer. xlix. 7, 8, 20, 21 ; and Obad. 8, 9. From the long sojourn at Kadesh (near Petra) a Sinaitic glory accrued to the Idumæan mountains, cp. § 156, Judges v. 4. *Paran*, *i. e.* one of the mountains in the Sinaitic cluster bordering on the wilderness of Paran, otherwise called 'the mount of God,' probably the hill looking down on the scene of the victory of Rephidim, Ex. xvii. 9, 10. The mountains of the South are similarly described as the scene of God's manifestations in the Exodus, Deut. xxxiii. 2 : 'Jehovah came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them ; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints.' For a discussion of the geography cp. Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, 3rd edition, p. 40.

Ver. 4. *as the light*, *i. e.* as the Sun. *neil*, God was not seen though surrounded with light, He 'covered Himself with light as with a garment' (§ 132. civ. 2).

Ver. 5. The light of God was a plague to any unholy thing that it glanced upon ; see in the history 1 Sam. v ; 2 Sam. vi. 7.

Ver. 7. *tents of Cushan*. The context shews that the allusion is not to Ethiopia, but to some tribe dwelling near the Midianites. Mr Poole (*Bib. Dict.*) suggests that Cushan may have been a royal title (as there was a king of Mesopotamia of that name mentioned in Judges iii. 8, 10).

curtains, *i. e.* which hang before the tent-door.

3.

Is Jehovah displeased against the rivers? 8
 or is Thy anger against the rivers, or Thy wrath against the sea,
 that Thou ridest upon Thine horses, upon Thy chariots of
 triumph?
 Thy bow is made quite bare, the threatenings of Thine arrows 9
 of victory,
 Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.

4.

The mountains saw Thee, they trembled, the overflowing of 10
 the waters passed by;
 the deep uttered his voice, the height lifted up his hands;
 the sun and moon stood still in their habitation, 11
 at the light of Thy flying arrows, at the shining of Thy
 glittering spear;
 Thou marchest through the land in indignation, 12
 Thou dost thresh the nations in anger.

5.

Thou wentest forth to save Thy people, to save Thine Anointed, 13
 Thou woundedst the head of the house of the wicked, cleaving
 him open to the neck;
 Thou didst strike with Thy arrows the head of his princes, 14
 which came out as a whirlwind to scatter me,
 their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly;

Ver. 8. *triumph*, literally, saving help.

Ver. 9. *bare*, i. e. for battle, cp. Is. lii. 10, 'Jehovah hath made bare before all eyes His holy arm.' *arrows*, i. e. lightning. Cp. ver. 11.

Ver. 10. *his*, i. e. its, see Glossary.

Ver. 11. *sun and moon*, the same phenomena are depicted as accompanying another great victory of the Hebrews; see Josh. iii. 16, and § 156, Judges v. 20.

Ver. 13. *cleaving him open to the neck*, literally making bare (A. V. 'discovering,' see Glossary) the foundation (of his body) unto the neck, i. e. cleaving him in twain by a fearful up-stroke.

Ver. 14. *poor*, i. e. oppressed Israel, see Glossary.

§ 161. HAB. III.] THE PSALM OF HABAKKUK.

419

Thou didst walk through the sea with Thine horses, 15
through the boiling of many waters.

*The Prophet, strengthened by the thought of the past to bear the miseries of the present,
awaiteth the interposition of God.*

I.

When I heard, my body trembled, 16
my lips quivered at the voice;
rottenness entered into my bones,
and I tremble in my knees,
for that I must wait in silence the day of trouble,
when He cometh up against the people to destroy them.

2.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, 17
neither shall fruit be in the vines;
although the labour of the olive shall fail,
and the fields shall yield no meat;
although the flocks shall be cut off from the fold,
and there shall be no herd in the stall;

3.

yet I will rejoice in Jehovah, 18
I will joy in the God of my salvation;
the Lord Jehovah is my strength, 19
and hath made my feet like hinds' feet,
and maketh me to walk on my high places.

Ver. 15. Cp. Job xli. 31, 'maketh the deep to boil like a pot.'

Ver. 16. *my knees*, lit. 'I tremble beneath me.' *wait in silence*. The Prophet prepares himself for a long period of affliction and apparent desertion by God, and is nerved to the endurance by the remembrance of God's former deliverances.

Ver. 17. *meat* i.e. fruit: so the 'meat offering' (Lev. ii. 1) was of fine flour, not of flesh.

Ver. 19. This verse is taken from § 12. xviii. 33. Compare this psalm with vv. 7—19 of the 18th. This termination is described by Stanley as 'a strain as of a second David, leaping from crag to crag like the free gazelle in a strength mightier than his own.'

§ 162. LAMENTATIONS I—V.

THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS.

ON the fall of Jerusalem¹ deportation to Babylon² was the inevitable fate of those who remained in the city; the only other alternative was to find an asylum in Egypt³. The miseries of those who remained among the ruins are depicted in the 102nd Psalm⁴; but those who had taken the other course were not more fortunate. It was natural to suppose that Egypt would have been only too glad to welcome the inveterate foes of her own great antagonist, and have settled them as a bulwark of her land. So in after times the Athenians shewed a sound policy in giving the exiled Mesenians a settlement where they would be a thorn in the side of Sparta; Persia, when her turn came, did not lose the opportunity, but made the re-established Jerusalem into a bulwark of the empire of Cyrus against the reviving Egyptian power. But, as before, Egypt proved a 'broken reed': the rout of Necho at Carchemish⁵ had made the name of Babylon too terrible for Egypt to dare to shew any favour to the Jewish exiles. She barely tolerated their presence within her borders, and by severity and oppression reduced them to starvation. The despair of the exiles at this unexpected persecution finds its expression in the book of Lamentations. The occasion for which the book was written appears to have been some feast, if such a word can be used of a solemn gathering in a land of exile. The object throughout is not only to depict the desolation of Jerusalem and the misery of the Jews whether exiles in Babylon or in Egypt, but to set forth the great riddle of the Captivity⁶, and to offer an attempt at its solution. The Jew asked himself, 'whence did all these misfortunes come?' A believer in the religion of Jehovah could only answer, 'from God Himself.' How then could the all-merciful God punish His

¹ Lam. i. 3, 4; ii. 5-7.
⁴ § 79.

² Lam. iii. 34.
⁵ Jer. xli. 2.

³ Lam. iv. 18; v. 5, 6, 9.
⁶ Cp. §§ 80-82, Introduction.

people so heavily and so long? To this question this book gives the answer, that God was still punishing His people, because they had sinned and must therefore learn the way to repentance. Here in fact may be heard the first notes of one of those higher truths which were taught by the Captivity¹, and which form the burden of the Psalms of the Restoration.

A general tradition has assigned this poem to Jeremiah². There is no certain evidence of the authorship, but the circumstances described correspond with those of the prophet's later years.

The poem is arranged on the alphabetical structure³, and consists of five parts, or *lamentations*, which together form a dramatic whole.

LAMENTATION I.—*The city of Jerusalem, under the image of a woman, bewails her desolation and sufferings.*

I.

- Alas! how doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! 1
 how is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations,
 the princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!
- By night she weepeth, the tears are on her cheeks, 2
 among all her lovers she hath none left to comfort her;
 all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they are become her enemies.
- Captive is Judah gone forth because of affliction and because of great servitude, 3
 she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest:
 all her persecutors overtook her in the midst of her straits.

¹ Cp. Introduction to Book IV. p. 231.

² See the superscription in the LXX. 'And it came to pass, after that Israel had been led captive and Jerusalem made desolate, that Jeremiah sat weeping, and he uttered this Lamentation over Jerusalem.'

³ For the alphabetical structure, see § 61. ix, x, and § 130. cxix. All the Lamentations are alphabetical except the last: it has been suggested that, as in the case of the 9th Psalm (§ 61), the writer was prevented from carrying out the alphabetical scheme which he had arranged for himself. The 3rd Lamentation is more elaborately alphabetical than the others, and in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Lamentations the 16th and 17th letters are interchanged. This structure is so essential to a right understanding of these poems, that a smaller type has been adopted in order to maintain it.

Ver. 3. *gone forth*, lit. 'wandered forth'; the Captivity was not one act, but a series of acts; in larger or smaller bands, captives were continually being carried away by the Chaldeans, while other bands fled to Egypt into voluntary banishment to escape a similar fate. From early times (cp. Joel iv. 2-8, Amos i. 6, 9) this emigration had begun, till we find Jeremiah himself induced to flee to Egypt in terror of the Chaldean army (cp. Jer. xxxix. 1, 3, 14; xl—xliv, xlvi. 13-26; 2 Kings xxv. 28).

Doleful are the ways of Sion, because none come to the solemn feast; 4
 all her gates are desolate; her priests sigh;
 her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

Enemies triumph over her, her adversaries prosper; 5
 for Jehovah hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions;
 her children are gone into captivity before the oppressor.

From the daughter of Sion all her beauty is departed, 6
 her princes are become like harts, that find no pasture;
 they are gone without strength before the pursuer.

2.

Grievous to Jerusalem is the remembrance of affliction and of her miseries, 7
 when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her;
 the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths.

Heavy are the sins of Jerusalem: therefore is she become an abomination; 8
 all that honoured her despise her, because they have seen her nakedness;
 yea, she herself sigheth and turneth aside;

In her skirts is her filthiness, she remembereth not the days to come; 9
 therefore she fell down wonderfully, she had no comforter.
 'O Jehovah! behold mine affliction, for the enemy hath magnified himself.'

Kings have stretched forth their hands against all her treasures of old; 10
 for she hath seen that the heathen entered into her sanctuary,
 whom Thou didst command not to enter into Thy congregation.

Lo! all her people sigh, they seek bread; 11
 they have given their pleasant things for meat to refresh their soul:
 'See, O Jehovah! and consider, for I am become vile.'

3.

Men! unto you do I call, all ye that pass by; behold and see! 12
 if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me,
 wherewith Jehovah hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger.

Nay, He hath sent down fire into my bones, it prevailleth against them; 13
 He hath spread a net for my feet, He hath turned me back,
 He hath made me desolate and faint all the day.

On me hath He bound the yoke of my transgression by His hand, 14
 it is wreathed and cometh on my neck; He hath made my strength to fail;
 the Lord delivered me into their hands, I am not able to rise up.

Ver. 7. The interruption to both sense and structure caused by his words 'all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old' have suggested the idea, that they have got misplaced from the 10th verse.

Ver. 12. *Men! unto you do I call.* So again Prov. viii. 4, 'O men, unto you do I call.'

Put away and trodden under foot are all the mighty men in the midst of me, 15
the Lord hath called an assembly to crush my young men;
the Lord hath trampled the daughter of Sion as in a winepress.

Rivers of tears run from mine eyes, yea, I weep thereat, 16
because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me:
my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.

Sion spreadeth forth her hands, there is none to comfort her; 17
Jehovah hath commanded concerning Jacob that his enemies be about him:
Jerusalem has become an abomination among them.

4.

True is Jehovah and righteous; for I have rebelled against His commandment: 18
hear, I pray you, all ye people, and behold my sorrow;
my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

Upon my lovers have I called, but they deceived me: 19
my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city:
while they sought their meat to refresh their souls.

Vouchsafe to behold, O Jehovah, for I am in distress; 20
my heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled;
abroad the sword bereaveth, at home it is as death.

When I sigh, they hear me: 'there is none to comfort me;' 21
all mine enemies have heard of my trouble, they are glad that THOU hast done it:
Thou shalt bring on the day that Thou hast called—and they shall be like unto me

Yet let their wickedness come before Thee, 22
do unto them as Thou hast done unto me for all my transgressions;
for my sighs are many and my heart is faint.

LAMENTATION II.—*The Prophet sheweth how all the miseries of
Jerusalem come at the hand of God Himself.*

I.

Alas for the daughter of Sion! the Lord hath covered her with a cloud in His anger, 1
and cast down from heaven unto earth the beauty of Israel;
and remembered not His footstool, in the day of His wrath!

Behold, He hath swallowed up all the habitations of Jacob, and hath not pitied; 2
He hath thrown down in His wrath the strongholds of the daughter of Judah;
He hath brought down, He hath profaned the kingdom and the princes thereof.

Cut off is all the horn of Israel; in His fierce anger hath He cut it off; 3
He hath drawn back His right hand from before the enemy;
He burned Jacob like a flaming fire, which devoureth round about.

Despitefully hath He bent His bow, even like an adversary, 4
 With His right hand He aimed like an enemy, and slew all that was pleasant to the eye
 in the tents of the daughter of Sion; He poured out His fury like fire.
 Even as an enemy was the Lord, He hath swallowed up Israel; 5
 He hath swallowed up all her palaces, He hath destroyed His strongholds;
 and hath increased in the daughter of Sion mourning and lamentation.
 Furiously hath He torn up His tabernacle, His place of assembly He rooteth up as a vine; 6
 — hath caused the feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Sion;
 He hath despised in His anger the king and the priest.

2.

Grievously hath He cast off His altar, He hath abhorred His sanctuary; 7
 He hath given up to the hand of the enemy the walls of her palaces;
 they have made a noise in the House of Jehovah as at a solemn feast.
 He hath purposed destruction against the wall of the daughter of Sion; 8
 He hath stretched out a line, He hath not withdrawn His hand from destroying;
 He made the rampart and the wall to lament and to languish together.
 Into the ground her gates are sunk, He hath rent and broken her bars, 9
 her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more;
 her prophets also find no vision from Jehovah.
 Joyless are the elders of the daughter of Sion; they sit upon the ground and keep silence; 10
 they have cast dust upon their heads, they have girded themselves with sackcloth;
 the virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.
 Lo! mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled; 11
 my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people;
 because the children and the sucklings swoon in the streets of the city.

3.

'Mother,' say they, 'where is corn and wine?' 12
 when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city;
 when their soul was poured out into their mother's bosom.
 Naught can I say for thee: naught can I liken to thee, O daughter of Jerusalem; 13
 what shall I equal to thee to comfort thee, O virgin daughter of Sion?
 for thy wound is great as the sea; who can heal thee?
 Only vain and foolish things have thy prophets seen; 14
 they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity;
 they have prophesied false prophecies to lead thee astray.
 Revilers clap their hands at thee, every one that passeth by; 15
 they hiss, and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem;
 'Is this the city men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?'

Ver. 13. *Naught can I say for thee*, i.e. there is no suffering similar to thine, the comparison of which with thine own might lessen thy grief.

Ver. 14. *discovered*. See Glossary.

Ver. 15, 16. These verses present a singular instance of the irregularity of alphabetical structure, similar to that found in iii. 43—46 and Lam. iv. 15, 16. It is important to mark such coincidences of irregularity, as tending to shew that the writings in which they occur are from the pen of one author.

Proudly have thine enemies opened their mouth against thee; 16
they hiss and gnash their teeth, saying, 'We have swallowed her up!
'this is the day we have looked for, we have found, we have seen it.'

Surely Jehovah hath done that which He had devised; 17
He hath fulfilled His word of old; He hath thrown down and hath not pitied;
He hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, He hath set up the horn of thine
adversaries,

4.

Their heart cried unto Jehovah, 'O wall of the daughter of Sion; 18
let tears run down like a river day and night;
give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease.'

'Up! arise! cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches 19
pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord;
lift up thine hand toward Him for the life of the young children.'

'Vouchsafe, O Jehovah, to consider to whom Thou hast done this; 20
shall the women eat their fruit and the children to whom they give suck?
shall the priest and the prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?'

'Woe for the young and for the old, they lie on the ground in the streets; 21
my virgins and my young men are fallen by the sword;
Thou hast slain them in Thine anger, Thou hast killed and not pitied.'

'Yea, Thou hast called together as on a solemn day the dwellers round about; 22
in the day of Thine anger none escaped nor remained;
those that I swaddled and brought up hath mine enemy consumed.'

LAMENTATION III.¹—*One of the suffering Jews telleth his personal sufferings, and seeth in his sorrow a help to repentance.*

I.

Am I not the man that have seen affliction by the rod of His wrath? 1
Aye, He hath brought me into darkness, not into light; 2
Against me only turneth He His hand, all the day long. 3

Ver. 19. The fourth line 'that faint for hunger in the top of every street,' which interrupts the structure, seems to have been interpolated to make the sense clear.

Ver. 22. Thou hast called together the dwellers in the defenceless towns of the country to Jerusalem for protection, as though it were to a feast; but their coming together was not for protection, but for death. In like manner in the great siege of Jerusalem by Titus the inhabitants of the villages flocked together for safety to the capital.

¹ *Argument.*—In this Lamentation the height of the drama is reached; the sufferings of the nation are individualized in the person of one man. The sufferer, weary of lamenting his woes, tries to glean some good from his misery. This mood opens the way to the idea that sorrow has its good side, as leading to repentance. Cp. § 75. li. Introduction.

Broken of Him are my bones, my flesh and my skin hath He wasted away;	4
Builted hath He against me; He hath compassed me with gall and travail,	5
Brought me into dark places, as they that be dead of old.	6
Compassed am I that I cannot get out; He hath made my chain heavy;	7
Crying also, I howl aloud, but He shutteth out my prayer;	8
Closed are my ways with hewn stones, my paths hath He made crooked.	9
Dreadful was He to me as a bear lying in wait, as a lion in secret places;	10
Desolate hath He made me; He hath led me aside and torn me in pieces;	11
Drawing His bow, He set me as the mark for His arrow.	12
Even into my reins hath He caused to enter the sons of His quiver;	13
Every day was I a derision to all peoples, and their song all the day long.	14
Exceeding bitterness hath filled my soul, yea He hath made me drunken with wormwood.	15
For my teeth, He hath broken them with gravel stones; He hath rolled me in ashes.	16
Far off from peace hast Thou set my soul; I forget prosperity;	17
For I said, 'my trust, and my hope in Jehovah is perished.'	18

2.

Get not mine affliction out of remembrance, the wormwood and the gall;	19
Graven are they on my heart, my soul is humbled within me;	20
Gladly do I recall to mind,—therefore have I hope—	21
'How the mercies of Jehovah are not consumed, and His compassions fail not;	22
'How they are renewed every morning; great is Thy faithfulness, O Jehovah!'	23
He is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in Him.	24
In Jehovah is kindness to them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him;	25
It is good that a man should quietly wait for the saving help of Jehovah;	26
It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.	27
Keeping silence he sitteth alone, when Jehovah layeth burdens upon him,	28
Kissing the dust with his mouth, if so be there may yet be hope,	29
Keeping not his cheek from the smiters, filled full with reproach.	30
Lo! the Lord will not cast off for ever;	31
Let Him cause grief, yet will He have pity according to the multitude of His mercies,	32
Loath is He to afflict and to grieve the children of men.	33

3

Men crush under their feet all the prisoners of the earth;	34
Men turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High;	35
Men subvert a man in his cause—but the Lord hath not seen it.	36

Ver. 5. *gall—travail*; see Glossary.

Ver. 13. *the sons of His quiver*, i. e. the arrows. Inversely, sons are said to fill a man's quiver; cp. § 95. cxxviii. 6.

Ver. 15. *wormwood*, a bitter herb, is symbolical of bitter calamity and sorrow. Cp. Jer. ix. 15, xxiii. 13.

Ver. 16. *gravel*, cp. Prov. xx. 7.

Ver. 36. *hath not seen*; else He would have punished.

No man hath said and brought it to pass, when the Lord commanded it not ;	37
Nay, is it not from the mouth of the Most High that evil proceedeth and good ?	38
Need a man complain while he liveth, a man for the punishment of his sin ?	39
O let us search and try our ways, and turn again to Jehovah !	40
Our hearts with our hands let us lift up unto God in the heavens !	41
Our transgressions and our rebellions hast Thou not pardoned ?	42
Round about us is Thine anger, and Thy wrath ; Thou hast slain and hast not pitied !	43
Round about Thee are Thy clouds, that our prayers should not pass through ;	44
Refuse hast Thou made us, and offscouring in the midst of the peoples.	45
Proud enemies have opened their mouths against us,	46
Pain and the pit are come upon us, desolation and destruction,	47
Pools of water are in mine eyes, for all the daughters of my city :	48
Streams of tears trickle down, and stay not ; yea, they run without ceasing.	49
Shall not Jehovah look down, and behold from heaven ?	50
Sore are mine eyes with weeping, for all the daughters of my city.	51

4.

They that are mine enemies without cause chased me sore like a bird ;	52
They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me,	53
The waters flowed over my head ; then I said, ' I am cut off.'	54
Upon Thy name did I call, O Jehovah, from the deep of the dungeon ;	55
Unto my voice Thou gavest heed : hide not Thine ear at my breathing and my cry ;	56
Upon the day that I called upon Thee, Thou drewest nigh ; Thou saidst ' Fear not.'	57
Verily Thou hast pleaded the cause of my soul, O Lord, Thou hast delivered my life ;	58
Very grievous is my wrong, Thou hast seen it, O Jehovah ; plead Thou my cause !	59
Verily Thou hast seen all their vengeance, and their imaginations against me.	60
With thine ears hast Thou heard their reproach, and their imaginations against me,	61
What they say, that are against me, and their device against me all the day long,	62
When they sit down, or when they rise up, lo ! I am their song !	63
Yield unto them a recompence, O Jehovah, according to the work of their hands !	64
Yield unto them sorrow of heart ! Thy curse be upon them !	65
Yea, persecute, and destroy them in anger, from under the heavens of Jehovah !	66

Ver. 37. *No man.* The sense is, 'Nothing whatever is done on earth without the fiat of God.'

Ver. 39. *while he liveth, i. e.* while there is life, there is yet time for amendment ; without amendment, mourning over sin and its consequences is not repentance.

Ver. 43—46. See ii. 15, 16.

Ver. 51. *daughters of my city.* Cp. § 36. xlviii. 12 and Lam. ii. 22.

LAMENTATION IV.¹—*The punishment of the innocent and of the guilty alike, is a riddle only to be answered by faith in a future retribution.*

I.

- Alas**, how is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed! 1
the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street!
Behold the sons of Sion, the precious ones, comparable to fine gold! 2
how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter!
Cruel is the daughter of my people, like the ostriches in the wilderness; 3
even the sea monsters draw out the breast, they give suck to their young:
Dried up for thirst is the tongue of the sucking child, it cleaveth to the roof of his mouth, 4
the young children ask bread, and no man breaketh it unto them.
Even they that did feed delicately are desolate in the streets; 5
they that were brought up in scarlet embrace dunghills;
For the punishment of the sin of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom, 6
that was overthrown in a moment; no hand was laid upon it.

2.

- Glistening** above the snow were her princes, whiter were they than milk; 7
they were more ruddy in body than rubies, and in person than sapphires;
How is their face become black, yea blacker than a coal! they are not known in the streets; 8
their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.
It is better to be slain with the sword, than to be slain with hunger; 9
for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.
Kindly women have sodden their own children with their hands, 10
this was their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.
Lo! Jehovah hath accomplished His fury, He hath poured out His fierce anger; 11
He hath kindled a fire in Sion, and it hath devoured the foundations thereof.

3.

- Mighty** ones of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed, 12
how that the adversary and the enemy have entered the gates of Jerusalem,
Namely, how the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, 13
that have shed the blood of the just in the midst of her, have caused this thing.

¹ *Argument.*—The perplexing thought occurs that all have not sinned alike, yet all alike are punished. Why should not the guilty alone suffer? The prophets, and priests, the highest and most sacred officers of the nation, have been the most guilty, and yet they only share the common woe. It is clear then that God does not mete out justice in the present; the Jews must wait in faith for an ultimate retribution.

Vv. 13, 14. The *priests* and *prophets*, instead of being the centre of unity in the besieged city, instead of by their calmness and wisdom saving the people from the fury of party strife, themselves led the murderous tumults that everywhere took place; as murderers they became *polluted*, and the people fled from them as from lepers. Even the *heathen*, who in v. 12 had thought that Jerusalem would never be taken, saw that the time of her destruction had come.

Out of the way did they wander, as blind men in the streets, polluted with blood, so that men could not touch their garments;	14
'Remove' cried the people to them, 'unclean! depart! depart! touch not!' yet they strove, going to and fro;	15
they said, 'They shall no more sojourn there among the heathen.'	
Put away are they from the face of Jehovah; He will no more regard them they respected not the persons of priests, they favoured not the elders.	16
Sore are our eyes in seeking vainly for our help, in our watching have we watched for a nation that could not save us.	17
They hunt our steps that we cannot go in our streets; our end is near, our days are fulfilled; for our end is come.	18
Upon us came oppressors, swifter than the eagles of heaven, they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.	19
Verily, the breath of our nostrils, the Anointed of Jehovah was taken in their pits, of whom we said 'Under his shadow we shall live among the heathen.'	20
Wilt thou rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz, the cup also shall pass unto thee, thou shalt be drunken and make thyself naked.	21

Ver. 15. This verse contains a dramatic fragment from the siege of Jerusalem. Ezekiel (xi. 1—10, xiv. 10, xvi. 6) gives us a general picture of the domestic struggles of those years of trial; but nowhere do we find so vivid a description of a single scene. The priests and prophets led a faction, which rested its whole hope on the speedy return of those already in exile to help their brethren at home. In answer to the cry of abhorrence raised by their fellow-citizens at their murderous proceedings, they cried in blind fury 'not long will they sojourn among the heathen.' That is, 'our brother exiles will soon be here to help us!' So the spectacle of a divided city operated as an encouragement to the heathen to complete its destruction; they respected not the *priests* and the *elders*, who should have been a source of strength to the besieged; and went forward in their bloody work.

Ver. 17. *a nation that could not save us, i.e.* Egypt, to whom the Jews looked for help against the Chaldeans, cp. Is. xxx. 1—7; xxxi. 1—3; but in vain, as had the Egyptians had the will, they had not the power. See the defeat of Nebuchadnezzar at Carchemish, Jer. xli. 2—12. See Introduction, p. 420.

Ver. 18. Here is described the case of exiles who have fled to Egypt for help and found none, for out of fear of the Chaldeans the Egyptians forbid the fugitives to *go in their streets, i.e.* to traffic backwards and forwards to Jerusalem.

Ver. 20. *Anointed.* The king, who should have accompanied the fugitives to Egypt, was taken prisoner by the Chaldeans. Probably Jehoiachin is meant, who was taken when going and led to Babylon (2 Kings xxiv; 2 Chron. xxxvi). Cp. Jer. xxix. 2; Ezek. xvii. 12.

Ver. 21. The *Edomites* are now occupying the land of *Uz*, the country in which Job lived (Job i. 1), to the east of Palestine, probably not far from Mount Seir, their old habitation. This land had probably been assigned to them by the conquering Chaldeans. The active assistance which the *Edomites* gave to Nebuchadnezzar at once embittered the hatred of the Jews (cp. § 100, cxxxvii.) and conciliated the friendship of the Chaldeans. They were then allowed to inhabit the south of Palestine and the plateau between it and Egypt, which they continued to hold till the time of the Maccabees (1 Macc. iv. 15, 29, 61); they appear also to have had territory to the N. E. of Jerusalem (1 Macc. v. 3), to which there may be an allusion here.

cup. Cp. Hab. ii. 15.

Yea, thy punishment is accomplished, O daughter of Zion ; He will no more carry thee away ; 22
He will visit thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom, He will discover thy sins.

LAMENTATION V.—*The people detail their life of toil and trouble,
and look to God in faith to begin His work of deliverance.*

Remember, O Jehovah, what is come upon us ; consider and behold our reproach !	1
our inheritance is turned to strangers, our houses to aliens.	2
We are orphans and fatherless, our mothers are as widows ;	3
we have drunken our water for money, our wood is sold unto us,	4
Our necks are under persecution ; we labour and have no rest ;	5
we have given the hand to the Egyptians, yea, to the Assyrians, only to be satisfied with bread.	6
Our fathers have sinned and are not ; we bear their iniquities ;	7
bondmen have rule over us ; no man delivereth us out of their hand.	8
We get our bread with the peril of our lives, because of the sword of the wilderness.	9
Our skin is burnt like an oven for the soreness of the famine.	10
They ravished the women in Sion, and the maids in the cities of Judah ;	11
princes were hanged up by them, the faces of the elders were not honoured ;	12
They took the young men to grind, and the children fell down under the wood,	13
the elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music.	14
The joy of our heart is ceased, our dance is turned into mourning ;	15
the crown is fallen from our head ; woe unto us that we have sinned !	16
For this our heart is faint ; for these things our eyes are dim ;	17
because of the mountain of Sion that is desolate, so that foxes walk upon it.	18
Thou, O Jehovah, sittest a king for ever : Thy throne is from generation to generation ;	19
wherefore dost Thou forget us for ever, and forsakest us so long time ?	20
Turn Thou unto us, O Jehovah, and we shall be turned ; renew our days as of old :	21
or wilt Thou utterly reject us ? wilt Thou be very wroth against us ?	22

Ver. 22. Here breaks out the hope of a Messianic kingdom, in which Jerusalem shall once more rule over the nations and punish her enemies, which is the theme of later Psalms. Cp. §§ 37, 63, notes.

Ver. 4. *water, wood.* The very commonest necessities of life can only be got for money.

Ver. 6. *hand to the Egyptians.* They have made terms with their enemies to save their lives from starvation.

Ver. 9. *sword—wilderness.* The fugitives dwell in the N. E. of Egypt, where they are exposed to the sudden incursion of the marauding Bedouins of the desert, such tribes as are described in § 85. cxx.

Ver. 13. *grind.* So Samson was employed as a slave to grind corn (Judges xvi. 21).

Ver. 14. *gate,* the place of public resort. Cp. § 134. cvii. 32 ; xxix. 7.

APPENDIX A.

On the origin and arrangement of the Psalter.

IT has been stated in the Preface, that the Psalms have been arranged, not by their common numbering in the Psalter, but according to the periods of the History, to which they seem most nearly to relate. This change has been made because the accepted order of the Psalms has obscured their historical meaning¹. That order is only the result of accidental growth, the Psalter itself resembling rather such a volume as would be produced if several different hymn-books were bound together than one carefully ordered selection.

1. *Superscriptions.* The *superscriptions*², or titles, which will be found at the head of most of the Psalms in the Bible Version, are hardly in any cases the work of the authors of the Psalms: they have for the most part been added in a later age, to suggest historical circumstances from which the psalm might naturally have originated³, or to give directions for the music by which it was to be accompanied in the services of the 2nd Temple⁴.

2. *Composite Psalms.* Several of the Psalms bear traces of being themselves a compilation; these have been called *composite* Psalms, as containing within them parts of more than one Psalm. The most remarkable cases are the following; the 60th Psalm (§§ 11, 125), of which the keynote is 'O God, thou hast cast us out and scattered abroad,' could only have been written at the time of the dispersion; but it contains an older fragment, inserted between the 5th and 10th verses, which is an oracle given to David, and promising victory over Edom and Moab. The independence of this part is clearly proved by its recurrence in the 108th Psalm.

The 19th Psalm (§ 8) consists of two parts (vv. 1—6 and 7—15); the first

¹ Cp. Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*, Introduction, p. lxxxix. 'To give a reason for the place of each Psalm is as impossible as to give a reason for the order of the different Suras in the Koran.' See also Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 2nd series, p. 585, on the authorship of the Books of the Old Testament.

² See Appendix B.

³ As the notices of authorship or history, pp. 438, 440.

⁴ As the musical directions, pp. 441, 442.

reflects the joy of David in the works of nature: the second the joy of some later Israelite in the study of the Law.

The 108th Psalm is not strictly speaking a psalm at all, being merely the result of the combination of part of the 57th, with the oracle mentioned above as forming part of the 60th. See § 143.

The 24th Psalm (§§ 3, 4) is composed of two psalms, both apparently the work of David: the first (vv. 7—10) sung before the Ark had been established at Jerusalem, and summoning the gates to be lifted up to receive the Ark: the 2nd (vv. 1—6) written after Jerusalem had become known as 'the hill of Jehovah.'

The 144th Psalm (§ 142) is almost all a compilation, and it contains three verses (vv. 12—14) which do not harmonize with the despairing tone of the rest of the psalm, but describe, in all the joy of the golden era of David, the plenteousness of a time of national prosperity.

The 68th Psalm, the great Dedication Ode (§ 114), contains quotations from the song of Deborah and other hymns of triumph.

The 27th Psalm (§ 24) contains a plaintive psalm inserted between the 7th and 15th verses of the original psalm: it breaks off suddenly from 'offering offerings of joy in the Temple' with the cry 'Hearken unto my voice, O Jehovah, when I cry...for there are false witnesses risen up against me and such as breathe out cruelty.'

In 1 Chron. xvi, the psalm given by the chronicler as sung at the Consecration of the Temple of Solomon, consists of portions of several psalms; thus vv. 8—22 came from § 144. cv. 1—15, vv. 23—33 from § 34, xc. 1—13, and vv. 34, 35 from § 133. cvi. 1, 45, 46.

3. *Recurrence of Psalms.* It may be added that there are instances in which a psalm occurs in more than one place. These instances prove that the several collections out of which the Psalter was made were formed independently of one another; or else the same psalm would not have occurred more than once. Thus (1) the 70th Psalm occurs again in the 40th; see § 72; (2) the 14th Psalm, 'The fool hath said in his heart, etc.' occurs again as the 53rd; see § 84; (3) parts of the 57th and 60th are combined to make up the 108th, see § 143; and (4) the 18th Psalm occurs also in 2 Sam. xxii.

4. *Doxologies.* Where the different smaller collections begin and end is a matter of conjecture. The Psalter has generally been considered to consist of five books: the 1st containing Pss. i—xli; the 2nd, xlii—lxxii; the 3rd, lxxiii—lxxxix; the 4th, xc—cvi; the 5th, cvii—cl; of some such division traces still remain.

Thus it appears to have been the custom among the compilers to conclude any collection of psalms with a doxology, or set form of 'praise to Jehovah.' It

is probable that this custom was adopted from the Temple service, where the call to praise Jehovah would be used as we use the 'Gloria Patri.' These doxologies, differing considerably from one another, appear four times in the Psalter, as follows:

§ 29. xli. 13. Blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting!
Amen and Amen.

§ 63. lxxii. 18, 19. Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel,
who only doeth wondrous things;
and blessed be the Name of His majesty for ever,
and all the earth shall be filled with His majesty.
Amen, Amen!

§ 133. cvi. 46. Blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel,
from everlasting and world without end,
and let all the people say, Amen.

§ 124. lxxxix. 50. Praised be Jehovah for evermore.
Amen and Amen.

The doxology at the end of the 106th Psalm is quoted as part of the psalm in 1 Chron. xvi. 35, 36, and therefore either we must assume that it was constantly used with the psalm in the Temple service, (for which reason it has been printed with the psalm¹), or the quotation in Chronicles must be from the minor collection of psalms to which the doxology had been already appended. The separation between the 4th and 5th books cannot therefore be pressed.

Besides the doxology after the 72nd Psalm, we have a notice appended, 'The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended,'—prayers here meaning psalms, as in Hab. iii.² and Ps. cii.³ The notice marks a change of subject rather than the conclusion of a book, as may be seen by comparing it with the similar notices in Job xxxi. 40, 'The words of Job are ended,' and in Jer. li. 64, 'Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.'

5. *Smaller collections, of which the Psalter is made up.* On the whole it is agreed that there are at least three distinct collections, Pss. 1—41; Pss. 42—89; Pss. 90—150; the two latter of which are themselves compiled from several sources.

I. The 1st collection (Pss. 1—41) is generally accepted as containing more Davidian psalms than the others: all except four⁴ are assigned by the super-

¹ See § 133.

² § 161.

³ § 79.

⁴ These are Pss. 1, 2, 10 and 33. Of these Ps. 10 should be united to Ps. 9 as in LXX., see § 61. Ps. 33, which has no superscription, comes from a very late period, and seems to have been once joined by mistake to Ps. 32.

scriptions to him, and, of these, eleven¹ have been held in this work to be certainly his. The 'use or song of the bow'² was handed down by memory, and this may at first have been the case with some of the old relics³ of David's time. In the time of Solomon however or of the kings of his century, a collection must have been formed to preserve the longer psalms; at any rate, whether previously compiled or not, David's Psalms were arranged together about the time of Josiah, incorporated with others, which were supposed to be of the same date, and the name of David was given to the whole collection. This compiler (in the 7th century) probably wrote the 1st Psalm (§ 60) as an introduction to the whole, and may have inserted the 2nd (§ 16) from some extant group of Solomon's songs⁴. The further characteristics of this first division are the use of the word Jehovah⁵, the presence of several historical notices⁶, (which appear to come from original sources and not from the books of Samuel,) and finally, the comparative meagreness of musical directions.

II. The 2nd collection (Pss. 42—89) consists of two parts, one, mainly assigned to David (Pss. 51—72), and the other, in two sections, to David's singers (Pss. 42—50; Pss. 73—89). Hence it has been suggested that the order of the Psalms in this collection has been changed, and that originally the Davidic part (51—72) came first, and was followed by the non-Davidic (42—50 and 73—89). This second collection is characterized (1) by the use of Elohim, and not of Jehovah⁷, (2) by the fullness of musical directions, (3) by the assignment of many psalms to traditionally celebrated musicians, (4) by the prevalence of historical inscriptions of an untrustworthy character⁸. It contains only one really Davidic psalm⁹, and that a fragment inlaid in a psalm of a later time. The collection seems to have been arranged by a com-

¹ Pss. 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 15, 18, 19, 24, 29, 32, and perhaps 23, 27.

² § 18. 2 Sam. i. 18. Cp. the superscription of Ps. 60, *to teach, i.e. to be learnt*.

³ Cp. §§ 10, 11. Pss. 110, 60.

⁴ Cp. 1 Kings iv. 32; *song* is the general term; see Appendix B (3).

⁵ Three titles are applied to the Deity; Adonai, which has been translated *Lord*; Elohim 'the mighty,' which has been translated *God*; and Jehovah 'He that is,' the national God of the Jews: see article 'Jehovah' in *Dict. of Bible*.

⁶ Pss. 3, 7, 18: see Appendix B (2).

⁷ Even in Pss. 53, 70, 71, which have appeared entirely or partly in Pss. 14, 40, 22, respectively: this confirms the theory which accounts for the absence of the name Jehovah by supposing that the compiler of this collection, in accordance with his own feelings or the custom of his time, scrupulously refrained from the use of the more awful name of Jehovah, and wrote Elohim in its place. This change was not completely carried out, for in the five last Psalms Jehovah reappears. For the origin of the scruple, see Lev. xxiv. 16; Deut. xxviii. 58; and article 'Jehovah' in *Dict. of Bible*.

⁸ See Appendix B (2).

⁹ Ps. 60, see §§ 11, 125.

piler after the Captivity¹, who had the special desire of the period to resuscitate all relics of David, whether genuine or not, and who took part in the restoration of the Temple music as far as possible in its old form. In his reverence for the traditional founders of his art, he forgot the difference between the poet who composed the poem and the musicians who arranged the service, and thus attributed psalms to men who, even had the psalms been the product of David's time, would not have been likely to be the authors².

III. The 3rd and concluding division (Pss. 90—150) has been divided into the 4th and 5th Books; from an uncertain interpretation of Ps. cvi. 46. It contains in itself several minor collections:

(1) The 15 pilgrim odes. Pss. 101—134: see § 85.

(2) The 20 Hallelujah psalms. Pss. 103—107; 111—118; 135, 136; 146—150. These are a group of psalms evidently designed for Temple use, in most of which Hallelujah³ occurs either at the beginning or the close. We may imagine the singing and music to cease, and the people, to the sound of the priests' trumpets, to join in a mighty chorus of 'Praise Jehovah.'

(3) Pss. 92—100, a group marked by the almost entire absence of superscriptions.

The further characteristics of this division are

- (1) the comparative meagreness of the superscriptions,
- (2) the preservation of two really Davidic psalms⁴,
- (3) the return to the use of the name 'Jehovah'⁵.

There is far less unity in this third division than in the two preceding, but the repetitions of previous psalms make it necessary to suppose that it assumed its present form before its union with the other two⁶.

These three great collections were thus compiled at different times and by

¹ But before the compilation of the third division, because in it we find the 108th Psalm, which is only a repetition of the 57th and 60th Psalms in their Elohistic form.

² For the early distinction of poet and singer, cp. Ex. xv. 1, 20, 21. Cp. the evident interest in musical details displayed by the author of the Books of Chronicles, especially 1 Chron. vi. xxv.; 2 Chron. v.

³ Hallelujah occurs at the beginning and end of 106, 113, 115, 135, 146, 148, 149, 150, at the beginning only of 111, 112, and at the end of 104, 105, 116, 117, 147. It either does not occur, or has been accidentally omitted in 103, 107, 114, part of 113, 118, 136 (another form of 135), which, however, are too much akin to the group to be separated from it. In LXX. Hallelujah is considered to be the superscription of these Psalms.

⁴ Pss. 101, 110.

⁵ Except in the 108th Psalm which is a mere repetition of the 57th and 60th in their Elohistic form; so Ps. lxxxvi. 14 is repeated from liv. 3: such repetitions prove that the third division is later than the 2nd.

⁶ Its compiler seems to have found Ps. 90 in some old collection, possibly attributed to Moses: hence he prefixed it to the collection. Similarly Ps. 2 was placed at the head of the 1st collection.

different men¹, from materials which from various sources they found ready to their hands: for these psalms they either adapted the extant or traditional superscriptions, or themselves invented new ones according to the use and nature of the individual psalms.

The concluding portion of the Psalter must have been known to the author of the Chronicles², and the whole is mentioned in Maccabees³ as 'the (works) of David.'

In the LXX, a Greek translation made at Alexandria in the third century B. C., we find considerable changes, and a remarkable ignorance of the meaning of the musical inscriptions hardly to be accounted for by distance from Jerusalem.

Some time then must be allowed between the final compilation of the Psalter, and its translation by the LXX⁴, during which the musical terminology⁵ may have been forgotten, and fresh errors have accumulated with regard to the authorship of particular psalms⁶. The final compilation can hardly

¹ Cp. the avowed editing of some of the Proverbs of Solomon by 'the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah.' Prov. xxv. 1, 'These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.'

² Cp. the Psalm in 1 Chron. xvi. How freely a compiler cut up any existing materials to suit his own purpose, may be seen from the fact, that *vv.* 8—22 come from Ps. cv. 1—15, *vv.* 23—33 from Ps. xcvi. 1—13: *vv.* 34—36 from Ps. cvi. 1, 47, 48. Cp. p. 432. It is instructive to notice that none of these Psalms are referred to David in the superscriptions. May we not infer that in the time of the chronicler all the psalms were already associated with David?

³ Cp. 2 Macc. ii. 13.

⁴ It may be perhaps useful to give the numbers of the Psalms in the LXX, and in the Vulgate as compared with the received Hebrew text and the Authorised Version.

LXX. 1—8	9	10—112	113	114, 115	116—145	146, 147	148—150
A. V. 1—8	9, 10	11—113	114, 115	116	117—146	147	148—150

⁵ Thus Michtam is translated 'for inscription on a pillar,' and most of their interpretations of the 10 Hebrew airs or measures have been rejected by modern Hebraists.

⁶ Thus we find that by the time of the LXX. two somewhat contradictory tendencies had crept in. One editor has seized almost every opportunity to attribute to David any psalm which had not previously been assigned to any other author; for instance Pss. 33, 43, 71, 91, 93—99, 137. Another looked more doubtfully on the Davidian authorship; the manifest impossibility of David's weeping 'by the waters of Babylon' induced him to append the words 'by Jeremiah' to the title of the 137th, which is thus attributed to two authors; it was probably the same Editor who shewed his historical knowledge by adding the words 'by Haggai and Zechariah' to the title of the 138th, already styled 'a Psalm of David,' by assigning the 71st to 'the sons of Jonadah, and the first captives,' and exhibited critical acumen by referring Pss. 76 and 80 to the period of the Assyrian invasion.

Other changes in the titles will be found in Pss. 24, 27, 29, 31, 38, 48, 66, 70, 76, 80, 105—107, 111—119, 135, 136, 143, 144, 146—150.

The desire mentioned above to increase the number of David's psalms is shewn by the

have been earlier than the time of Nehemiah, in the latter half of the 5th century, or later than the conclusion of the Persian rule towards the end of the 4th.

On the whole we come to the following conclusions :

1. That the present Psalter is composed of collections originally distinct ;
2. That though some grouping together of contemporaneous psalms may be noticed in the minor divisions, the compiler of the whole did not attempt a fusing of the different collections, with a view to a chronological arrangement ;
3. That internal criticism, an examination in fact of the language and the historical allusions, is the only means by which the psalms can be arranged in any chronological order.

addition of an evidently spurious psalm, which, though apparently a translation, is now only extant in the Greek. From the heading it appears that the number of the Psalms (150) which notwithstanding the changes is adhered to in the LXX, was by this time the recognized number of 'the Psalms of David.' Its title is 'This Psalm, a genuine Psalm of David, in some MSS. 'to') David,' and beyond the number, was written 'when he fought the single combat with Goliath.'

I was a little one among my brethren,
the youngest in my father's house ;
I kept the sheep of my father,
my hands framed an instrument of music,
and my fingers fashioned a psaltery.

Yet who shall tell it to my Lord ?
He is Lord, He heareth it ;
He sent His angel,
and took me from my father's sheep,
and anointed me with the oil of His anointing.

Great men and beautiful were my brethren,
but the Lord had no pleasure in them ;
I went forth to meet the alien,
and he cursed me by his gods ;
but I drew his own sword and cut off his head,
and took away reproach from the sons of Israel.

Another era in the growth of spurious Psalms is marked by the Psalter of Solomon, a collection of 18 Psalms with titles still extant in a Greek translation, and probably composed about 170 B.C.

It may be added as an instance of the almost unconscious manner in which the number of Psalms attributed to David may grow even in modern times, that the authors of the summaries prefixed to the Psalms in the A. V. have attributed to him not only Pss. 43, 71, which, though not assigned to him in the Hebrew, are thus assigned in the LXX, but also 42, 66, 120, 132, which are not assigned to him in either. In the summary to the 120th they even incorporate a conjecture of their own, that David was then praying against Doeg.

APPENDIX B.

On the superscriptions, or titles of the Psalms.

THE superscriptions have not in this edition been given with the Psalms to which they belong, nor have the notes been burdened with discussions as to their meaning. The latest English critic¹ has stated as the result of his study, that in historical notices as in statements of authorship, the superscriptions cannot be relied on. 'They are sometimes genuine, and really represent the most ancient tradition². At other times they have been invented by the caprice of later editors and collectors, the fruits of conjecture³ or of dimmer and more uncertain traditions⁴. In short, the inscriptions of the Psalms are like the subscriptions to the Epistles of the New Testament. They are not of any necessary authority, and their value must be weighed and tested by the usual critical processes.'

The superscriptions are of four classes, (1) those that relate to authorship, (2) to historical circumstance, (3) to the purpose of the psalm, (4) to the musical accompaniment.

(1) *Authorship.*

In the Hebrew text of the 150 Psalms, 73 are assigned to David, 24 to David's singers, 2 to Solomon, 1 to Moses, 50 are anonymous⁵.

The customary belief has associated all with David, and still pertinaciously claims for him at least those which in the Hebrew titles are assigned to him;

¹ Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*, Introduction, p. cxi.

² As in Pss. 3, 7, 18, 60, 102.

³ As in Pss. 30, 34, 51—59, 72, 127, &c.

⁴ As Ps. 90.

⁵ In the LXX., 83 are assigned to David, of which 14 had not previously been assigned to him, while four (Pss. 122, 124, 131, 133) are no longer assigned to him; the same 27 as in A. V. are assigned to David's singers, to Solomon, and to Moses, 1 to Jeremiah, 4 to Haggai and Zechariah, 1 to the sons of Jonadab. This, allowing for three Psalms having two authors assigned to them, leaves 34 still anonymous. There is a curious tradition in the Talmud which may serve as a specimen of one kind of Hebrew criticism: 'David wrote the book of Psalms, of which, however, some were composed by the ten venerable elders, Adam the first man, Melchizedech, Abraham, Moses, Heman, Jeduthun, Asaph, and the 3 sons of Korah.' Quoted by Mr Westcott, *Bib. Dict.* 'Canon.'

but this belief no doubt had its origin in a misunderstanding of the Jewish custom, by which a composite work was soon called by the name of its most eminent author, and indeed as we have seen¹, the Psalms were quoted as early as the time of the Maccabees as the work of David, just as all the Pentateuch was quoted as the work of Moses.

That the Hebrew psalmists were accustomed to prefix superscriptions to their own poems has been maintained by many. One writer² explains the incongruity of assigning Psalms to David and his contemporaries which are obviously of a later date by the following theory: 'No critic whatever,' he writes, 'contends that all these eleven Psalms (Psalms 73—83) belong to the age of David; and in real truth, internal evidence is in every single instance in favour of a later origin. They were composed then by 'the sons of Asaph,' the members by hereditary descent of the choir which Asaph founded. It was to be expected that these psalmists would in superscribing their psalms prefer honouring and perpetuating the memory of their ancestor to obtruding their own personal names on the Church. . . . If now in the times posterior to those of David the Levite choirs prefixed to the psalms which they composed the names of Asaph, Heman, and Ethan, out of a feeling of veneration for their memories, how much more might the name of David be prefixed to the utterances of those who were not merely his descendants, but also the representatives for the time being, and so in some sort the pledges of the perpetual royalty of his lineage! The name of David is used to denote in other parts of scripture, after the original David's death, the then head of the Davidic family. . . . And thus then we may explain the meaning of the late Davidic superscriptions in the Psalter. The Psalms to which they belong were written by Hezekiah, by Josiah, by Zerubbabel, or others of David's posterity.'

This theory is here only quoted to shew that even those who believe fully in the superscriptions have to alter their meaning to meet the demands of criticism. The result is much the same as if they had been disregarded.

There is no proof that the Hebrew psalmists were in the habit of prefixing their names to their works. A prophet must, it is true, from the nature of his office, add his name to give weight to his words, but there was no such necessity for the psalmist; that the custom of adding the name was not an universal one is proved by the existence of 50 anonymous Psalms. And again, internal criticism has shewn that many of the existing superscriptions are unquestionably erroneous. The conclusive arguments which may be derived from language³ must be taken on the verdict of scholars; but historical criticism will come home to every reader. No

¹ Appendix A, p. 436.

² *Dict. of Bible*, 'Psalms.'

³ As from the Chaldaisms, which mark the writings of the Return.

one, for instance, would hesitate in rejecting the superscription in the Septuagint which assigns to David the 137th Psalm, which begins with the words 'By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept:' even the compiler in his first attempts at criticism did not hesitate to suggest the more possible authorship of Jeremiah. It is equally impossible to conceive that David could write in the 14th Psalm, 'when Jehovah turneth *the captivity* of His people, then shall Jacob rejoice,' or that at any period of his life he could have used the words contained in the last two verses of the 51st Psalm; or again, that, when he fled from the court of Achish, he should have vented the feelings of his wild nomad life in an acrostic psalm¹, as we should be required to believe if we accepted the title of the 34th.

A list of those which are accepted as Davidic is given pp. 5, 6. For the rest, even those who may not accept entirely the order in which they have been arranged in this work, will, it is believed, be led by a closer study of them to accept the conclusion that they are not David's.

It is easy in some cases to trace the grounds of internal criticism which have caused the assignment of psalms to particular authors. For instance, the assignment of the 127th (§ 94) to Solomon seems to rest simply on the words 'Except Jehovah build the house,' which have misled the critic into the idea that the building of Solomon's Temple is the subject of the Psalm; and so again the mention of Sheba and Tarshish² may have led to the assignment of the 72nd (§ 63) to the same author.

The assignment of 12 Psalms to Asaph, 12 to the sons of Korah, (including 1 to Heman the Ezrahite, himself a descendant of Korah³), and 1 to Ethan, or Jeduthun⁴, seems to point to a collection in which equal numbers were assigned to each of the three great traditional musicians. In this case the other 11 of Ethan are either omitted or lost⁵.

¹ Ps. 34, where Abimelech (Gen. xx. 2) in the superscription is a mistake for Achish: see 1 Sam. xxi. 10. Other Alphabetical Psalms attributed to David are 9, 25, 37.

² Cp. § 63, lxxii. 20 with 2 Chron. ix. 1, 21.

³ Cp. 1 Chron. vi. 33, 37.

⁴ Cp. 1 Chron. xv. 16—22 with xxv. 1, 3.

⁵ There seems to be some confusion after the 87th, for the heading of the 88th is obviously made up of two: not only is the authorship assigned to both the sons of Korah, and to Heman, but the Psalm is called both a Psalm and a Maschil. See below (4). We must either suppose that the Psalm has had superscriptions written for it by two compilers, or more probably that the first heading 'A Song or Psalm, by the sons of Korah,' belongs to a lost Psalm.

(2) *Historical circumstance.*

Of the 73 Psalms assigned to David by the titles only 13 have historical notices prefixed to them¹.

Of these historical notices four² are prefixed to Psalms undoubtedly Davidic, and bear the marks of independent tradition. These are

Ps. 3. 'When he (David) fled from Absalom his son.'

Ps. 7. 'Which he sang unto Jehovah, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.' Cush is not mentioned in the historical books.

Ps. 18. 'David, the servant³ of Jehovah, who spake unto Jehovah the words of this song in the day that Jehovah delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul, and he said.' The superscription and psalm occurs in 2 Sam. xxii.

Ps. 60. 'When he strove with Aram of the two rivers [the Syrians of Mesopotamia] and with Aram of Zobah; when Joab returned and smote of Edom in the valley of Salt twelve thousand.'

This notice does not agree in details with the accounts in 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14; x. 16; 1 Chron. xix. 6—19; and must therefore, as well as that of Ps. 7, be founded on some other chronicles, unknown to us⁴: these two are therefore of more weight than the generality of these superscriptions.

The nine others⁵, for instance, do not seem worthy of credit: they appear chiefly in the Davidian portion of the second Collection (51—72), and are in all cases founded on the Books of Samuel: in these cases it would seem that the compiler, starting with the idea that the Psalms were David's, selected such incidents from the history as he considered adapted to the thoughts in the Psalms.

The superscription of Ps. 102 (§ 79) has no parallel among the Psalms: its poetical character and peculiar style seem to mark it as the work of the Psalmist himself.

¹ The LXX. also prefixes historical notices to Pss. 27, 76, 80, 93, 96, 143, 144.

² Pss. 3, 7, 18, 60.

³ The title 'servant of Jehovah' is not used of a living person, see Deut. xxxiv. 5; Josh. i. 1. So in § 142. cxliv. 10, 'hath delivered David His servant from the peril of the sword,' and in the superscription of Ps. xxxvi. 'A Psalm of David the servant of Jehovah.'

⁴ For traces of the existence of lost chronicles, cp. 1 Kings xi. 41, 'the acts of Solomon;' 1 Chron. xxix. 29, 'the book of Nathan the prophet, the book of Gad the seer,' to which in 2 Chron. ix. 29 are added 'the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer,' and 2 Sam. i. 18 'the book of Jasher.'

⁵ Ps. 34, from 1 Sam. xxi. 10; for the mistake, see above, p. 254, note; Ps. 51, from 2 Sam. xii. suggested by vv. 4, 14; Ps. 52, an Alphabetical Psalm, the notice comes from 1 Sam. xxii. 6, suggested by vv. 1, 2; Ps. 54, from 1 Sam. xxiii. 19, suggested by ver. 3; Ps. 56, from 1 Sam. xxi. 11—16; Ps. 57, from 1 Sam. xxii; Ps. 59, from 1 Sam. xix. 11, suggested by vv. 6, 14, which, however, do not describe the siege of a house but of a town; Ps. 63, from 1 Sam. xxii. evidently because in ver. 1 'a dry and thirsty land' was taken literally; Ps. 142, same as Ps. 57.

(3) *Purpose of the Psalm.*

Superscriptions of this character are prefixed to 116 Psalms.

In respect to its purpose a poem is described as song, prayer, or hymn of praise.

i. *Song* is the general term¹, denoting a metrical, or at least rhythmical piece, not necessarily set to music, and is usually coupled with some more definite designation. It occurs in 30 superscriptions, and may be used with any of those which follow. Thus it occurs with a musical notice, Ps. 46; with 'Psalm' in 12 titles; as '*song of loves*,' *i.e.* a bridal song, Ps. 45 (§ 23).

So '*Song of ascents*' (degrees, A. V.) Pss. 120—134, *i.e.* as explained in p. 221, 'of the goings up to Jerusalem from exile.' So Ezra vii. 9, 'the foundation of the going up;' cp. John xii. 20.

'*Song at the dedication of the house*,' Ps. 30; these words are apparently inserted between the words 'a Psalm' and 'of David;' the house is not David's but the Temple: the compiler probably considered vv. 11, 12 to allude to 2 Sam. vi.

'*Song for the sabbath day*,' Ps. 92; so the LXX. adds notices to Pss. 24, 29, 31, 37, 48, 66, 94, 95, assigning particular Psalms for use on different days of the week, and on feast days.

ii. *Prayer* is applied apparently by the authors themselves to Ps. 102 and Hab. iii.; it occurs also Pss. 17, 86, 90, 142: it may be used with either Shigaion (Hab. *l.c.*) or Maschil (Ps. 142). Cp. Ps. lxii. 20.

iii. *Hymn of praise* only applied to Ps. 150, though the whole Psalter is in the Hebrew text 'the hymns.'

The purpose of a *Psalm* is further defined in Ps. 100 as 'a Psalm for thanksgiving;' in Psalm 60 as 'to teach,' *i.e.* to be learnt by heart; cp. 2 Sam. i. 18; in Pss. 38, 70, as 'a Psalm to bring to remembrance;' *i.e.* to be used with a penitential sacrifice, as we learn from Is. lxvi. 3, 'he that maketh a memorial,' translated in A. V. 'he that burneth incense;' cp. Lev. ii. 2.

(4) *Musical accompaniment.*

The musical directions are of three kinds, which are placed in a regular order.

1. The title translated (A. V.) *to the chief musician* in any case denotes that the Psalm is set to music. This title may be translated 'for the leader,'

¹ Cp. Is. v. 1; Song of Solomon i. 1, &c.

'by the leader,' and 'for leading;' it occurs in 55 Psalms, and appears in a longer form in 6 Psalms and (§ 160) Habakkuk iii. 'for leading with music.'

2. The kind of accompaniments is defined by the use of one and only one of four designations: Psalm, Maschil, Michtam, Shiggaion.

Psalm is the most common, being applied 56 times; hence the Greek translation, connected with psaltery, has been used to designate all the 150 poems; it denotes 'a song with an accompaniment;' *i. e.* with the harp, psaltery (lute), and cymbals, the ordinary Temple music. Cp. § 52. lvii. 9 and § 153. cl. 3.

Maschil is applied to 14 Psalms: 'a skilfully constructed song,' *i. e.* with more elaborate music. It occurs § 115. xlvii. 7, where its connection with music is clear from the context, and where it has been translated 'glorious,' from an inability to convey more accurately the musical idea.

Michtam is applied to 6 Psalms, and almost the same word (*Michtav*) to the writing of Hezekiah in § 159, Is. xxxviii. It might be translated either a golden poem, *i. e.* of peculiar value; or a hidden poem, a mystery, a dark speech (cp. § 66. xlix. 4): but neither affords the necessary contrast to the last two terms. Ewald considers that Maschil was accompanied only by the harp and the treble cymbals, and Michtam, the song of more deep import, by the psaltery and loud or bass cymbals (see § 153. cl. 4).

Shiggaion, an ode with wild and changing music, applied to Ps. 7, like the Greek dithyramb; so (§ 160) Hab. iii. 1, we have 'to dithyrambic measures.'

3. The tone or mode to be used is then given, chiefly by a quotation from some familiar poem which had already been set to that particular mode. Of these modes we find 10¹: much difference of opinion exists as to their meaning, and their interpretation throws no light whatever on the Psalms.

Selah is the only term used in the course and at the conclusion of Psalms.

¹ Some of the modes relate to the place or origin of the mode; thus *upon Sheminith* (Pss. 6, 12), 'to the eighth,' cp. 1 Chron. xv. 20, probably not the octave, but the eighth in order; *to Gittith*, Pss. 8, 81, 84, 'to the Gath mode,' *i. e.* the mode introduced from Gath; *to Jeduthun*, Pss. 62, 77, 39, *i. e.* to the mode introduced by Jeduthun, or Ethan (see p. 440), one of the three great musicians of the time of David. In others we find the first words of some popular song; *to Alamothe*, Ps. 46, cp. 1 Chron. xv. 20, and *to Muth-labben*, Ps. 9, are obscure, but the ordinary explanation is 'to maidens,' and 'to the death of the son. Ewald, altering the reading in Ps. 9, translates 'to the mode, youth hath the son,' and considers the title of Ps. 46 an abbreviation of 'to youth:' the word 'youth' being the commencement of some song. *To Soshannim*, Pss. 45, 69, 80, 60, *i. e.* 'to Lilies,' or as Pss. 80, 60 'to 'As lilies is the covenant,' *i. e.* pure as lilies; *to Altaschith*, Pss. 57, 58, 59, 75 'to the mode of 'destroy not;' *to Mahalath*, Ps. 88, 53, *i. e.* 'to the sickness,' and in 88 'to be sung to 'the sickness.' Similarly *to Aijelet-Shahar*, Ps. 22 'to the hind of the red glow of morning,' and *to Jonath-elem-rechokim*, Ps. 56 'to 'the dove of dumbness from the strangers.' *To Nehiloth*, in Psalm 5, has been interpreted 'to flutes,' but it would seem to denote a mode like the preceding, though its meaning is not clear.

It is given, wherever it occurs, in the A. V., and denotes, 'higher, up;' it seems to be a direction to the music to play loud during intervals in which the voices are silent. It occurs 71 times in 39 Psalms, and 3 times in (§ 160) Hab. iii., generally at the end of a strophe: once, in Ps. ix. 16, we find 'Higgaion, Selah,' 'upon a loud instrument, music play loud,' a more complete form of the same; cp. Ps. xcii. 3, 'upon a loud instrument, upon the harp.'

For the subjects treated in both these Appendices, the most suggestive account will be found in Ewald's *Dichter der salten Bundes*, Vol. I. pp. 209, 239. For a full discussion of the literature on the obscure superscriptions, the English reader is referred to articles in the *Dict. of the Bible* by Mr Wright, and to ch. 4, 5 of the very satisfactory introduction of Mr Perowne to *The Book of Psalms*. Among other authors consulted have been Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Psalms* (p. 37); Hupfeld, *The Psalms*, vol. I. (2nd Ed.), Hengstenberg, vol. III. p. xxii.; Hitzig, *The Psalms*; and of English writers, Thrupp, and Davidson.

GLOSSARY

of Archaisms or Ambiguous Expressions in the Prayer-Book Version of the Psalms.

abide patiently upon Him, patiently *abide* the Lord, *i.e.* wait for, rest upon, § 62. xxxvii. 7, 9. *abide* is connected with *abeyance*, 'suspense;' it has often been replaced by 'look for,' as it has been in 'to all that *abiden* the redemption of Israel,' Luke ii. 38, and in '*abiding* and highing (hieing or hasting) unto the coming of the day of our Lord,' 2 Pet. iii. 11 (Wiclif).

abject, subst.—the very *abjects* came together against me, *i.e.* the vilest persons, § 70. xxxv. 15. Lat. *abjectus*, 'thrown away,' cp.

'I deemed it better so to die,
than at my foeman's feet an *abject* lie.'

Mirror for Mag.

after—comfort us again *after* the time that Thou hast plagued us, *i.e.* in proportion to, § 34. xc. 15. Cp. 'deal not with us *after* our sins' (Litany). So 'to do for him *after* the custom of the law,' Luke ii. 27. 'Let the earth bring forth the living creature *after* his kind,' Gen. i. 24, *i.e.* 'each according to,' and 'let us make man *after* our likeness,' ib. 26. Also in Wiclif, 'he schal yelde to every man *after* his works,' Matt. xvi. 27. *after*, with 'aft,' 'afar,' comes from 'af' or 'of,' and so means '*from* the basis of.'

altogether lighter than vanity itself, *i.e.* all (of them) together, § 32. lxii. 9.

bonds—break their *bonds* asunder, *i.e.* bands of yoke, § 16. ii. 3. Cp. Jer. v. 5, 'these have broken the yoke and burst the *bonds*.'

comfortable—praise Thy Name, because it is so *comfortable*, *i.e.* comforting, consoling, § 48. liv. 6. So Juliet cries 'O *comfortable* friar!' *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 148.

compass—when the wickedness of my heels *compasseth* me round about, *i.e.* encompass, go round, § 66. xlix. 5; § 13. xxxii. 8, &c.

coney—stony rocks for the *conies*, § 132. civ. 18. Prov. xxx. 26, 'the *conies* are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks,' *i.e.* the Syrian hyrax, which is like an Alpine marmot. In English *coney* is the old name for a rabbit.

conversation—such as are of a right *conversation*, *i.e.* path, mode of life, § 59. l. 23. Cp. Phil. iii. 20, 'our *conversation* is in heaven,' where it means 'citizenship.' So 'having your *conversation* honest among the Gentiles,' 1 Pet. ii. 12. (Latin, 'versari.')

cunning—let my right hand forget her *cunning*, *i.e.* skill, used, as 'craft' was, in a good sense (Germ. kennen), § 100. cxxxvii. 5.

darling—deliver my *darling* from the power of the dog, *i.e.* my dear life, § 69. xxii. 20; § 70. xxxv. 17. It is used like 'mine honour,' 'my glory,' as parallel with 'soul'

- and 'life,' § 2. vii. 5. *darling* is diminutive of dear; Wiclif uses '*darlings* of God' for 'beloved of God,' Rom. i. 7.
- discover* the thick bushes, for 'uncover,' *i. e.* 'strip off leaves from,' § 7. xxix. 8, and § 162. Lam. ii. 14. Compare 'whether any man have pulled down or *discovered* (unroofed) any church' (Grindal), and
- 'Go draw aside the curtains and *discover*
the several caskets to this noble prince.' *Mer. of Ven.* ii. 7.
- dissemble*, the strange children shall *dissemble* with me, § 12. xviii. 45, *i. e.* pay court. Cp. under *liars*.
- dragons*—1. 'smitten into the place of *dragons*,' *i. e.* haunts of jackals, § 119. xlv. 20; 2. 'brakest the heads of the *dragons* in the waters,' *i. e.* crocodiles, representing Egypt, § 45. lxxiv. 14.
- ensue*—seek peace and ensue it, *i. e.* 'follow after and overtake' (Fr. *ensuivre*), § 78. xxxiv. 14, quoted in 1 Pet. iii. 11. Wiclif translates 'seek peace and *sue* it,' and Matt. viii. 1, 'much people *sued* (followed) him.' Cp.
- 'let not to-morrow then *ensue* to-day.' *Rich.* II. ii. 1.
- eschew* evil, *i. e.* flee from, shun, avoid, § 78. xxxiv. 14. (Germ. *scheuen*, Eng. *shy*.) Cp. Shaksp. *Merry Wives*, v. 5, 'What cannot be *eschewed* must be embraced.'
- fain*—my lips will be *fain*, *i. e.* glad, § 76. lxxi. 21. So 'no man alive so *fain* as I,' 2 *Henry VI.* iii. 1. (To fawn on is to 'seem fain at seeing.')
- fellow*—the virgins that be her *fellows*, *i. e.* companions, equals or followers, § 23. xlv. 15, 8. *Fellow* properly means partner: it is used in the *Tempest* for 'wife,'—'to be your fellow you may deny me, but I'll be your servant.' *T.* iii. i. 84.
- flitting*—Thou tellest my *flittings*, *i. e.* wandering (flit, flee, fleet), § 51. lvi. 8.
- folk*—blessed are the *folk*, that He hath chosen to Him to be His inheritance, *i. e.* nation (Germ. *volk*), § 150. xxxiii. 12.
- free* among the dead, *i. e.* fully, without reserve.' Cp. § 58. lxxxviii. 4.
- free* spirit, *i. e.* freely given of God's own impulse with no compulsion from without. Cp. § 75. li. 12. So those who were of a free (liberal) heart, 2 Chron. xxix. 31.
- fret*—a moth *fretting* a garment, *i. e.* eat, devour, § 33. xxxix. 12. Cp. Lev. xiii. 55, if the garment 'is *fret* inward,' *i. e.* eaten into by the plague (Germ. *fressen*).
- froward*—with the *froward* thou shalt learn frowardness, *i. e.* cross, perverse ('from-ward,' opp. of 'toward'), § 12. xviii. 26; § 53. lviii. 3; § 45. lxdv. 2.
- fruit* shall shake like Libanus, *i. e.* fruit of body, posterity, § 63. lxxii. 16. Cp. Lam. ii. 20, 'shall the women eat their *fruit* and children of a span long?'
- glory*—awake up, my *glory*, *i. e.* my soul, or 'the best member that I have,' § 52. lvii. 9, cp. *darling*.
- grave* (verb)—he hath *graven* and digged up a pit, *i. e.* dig, § 2. vii. 16 (Germ. *graben*).
- health*—looking for Thy health, *i. e.* 'saving help,' or 'mercy,' 'salvation' (Germ. *heil*, Eng. heal, hail, hale, whole), § 130. cxix. 123; § 75. li. 14; § 113. lxxvii. 2, &c.
- hell*—they lie in the *hell* like sheep, *i. e.* Hades, or 'abode of dead,' § 66. xlix. 14; § 28. xxx. 3, as in 'He descended into *hell*.'
- his*—mine eye shall see *his* lust of mine enemies, *i. e.* its, § 105. xcii. 10; cp. Matt. vi. 33, 'the kingdom of God and *his* (its) righteousness,' and 1 Cor. xv. 38, 'God giveth...to every seed *his* (its) own body.' 'Its' is not used in the A. V. of 1611.
- hold* of superstitious vanities, *i. e.* hold to, with, § 57. xxxi. 7.
- indite*—my heart is *inditing* of a good matter, *i. e.* dictate, compose, § 23. xlv. 1. (Old French, *endicter*.)
- inform* his princes after his will, *i. e.* mould by instruction, § 144. cv. 22; § 13. xxxii. 9.
- isles*, § 81. lxxvii. 1 and note. The Hebrew word thus translated, as in 'the isles of the

Gentiles,' &c. originally meant any habitable land, as opposed to sea, and not merely islands. In fact, it was like our word coast (French, *côte*, a side), which is not properly limited to sea-coasts.

knapp—peth the spear in sunder, the old form of 'snap,' § 35. xlv. 9. (Germ. knappen.)

know—eth the way of the righteous, *i. e.* recognize with approval, § 60. i. 7. Cp. Nah. i. 7, 'He knoweth them that trust in Him.'

large—the Lord heard me *at large* (perhaps for 'fully'), the meaning should be 'heard [and set me] *at large*,' *i. e.* at liberty, § 101. cxviii. 5.

lay to—it is time for Thee, Lord, to lay-to Thine hand, *i. e.* 'apply,' § 130. cxix. 126. Cp. Shaksp. *Temp.* iv. 1, 'lay to your fingers; help to bear this away.'

learn—lead me forth in Thy truth and *learn* me, *i. e.* 'teach,' § 77. xxv. 4, 8; § 130. cxix. 66, &c.

leasing—seek after *leasing*, § 15. iv. 2; speak *leasing*, § 44. v. 6; *i. e.* 'lying,' 'falsehood.' (A. S. *leas*, empty, false.)

liars—to be found *liars*; often a translation of 'feign obedience,' 'pay homage,' 'submit to.' § 116. lvi. 2 and Deut. xxxiii. 29. Cp. 'the strange children shall dissemble (q. v.) with me,' § 12. xviii. 45.

lien—though ye have *lien* among the pots, *i. e.* 'lain,' part. of 'to lie,' § 114. lxviii. 13. Cp. Gen. xxvi. 10, 'have *lien*.'

lighten mine eyes, *i. e.* give light to, enlighten, § 27. xiii. 3; 'they had an eye unto Him, and were *lightened*,' § 78. xxxiv. 5.

lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places, *i. e.* land divided by line, heritage, § 65. xvi. 7.

lover—my *lovers* and my neighbours did stand looking on my trouble, *i. e.* a loving or intimate friend, § 71. xxxviii. 11.

memorial—their *memorial* is perished with them, *i. e.* memory of them, § 61. ix. 6. Cp. Esther ix. 28, 'nor the *memorial* of them (the days of Purim) perish,' so 'Thy *memorial* endureth from one generation to another,' *i. e.* remembrance of Thy mercies, § 145. cxxxv. 13.

monster unto many, *i. e.* a marvel, in sense of Lat. *monstrum*, a thing pointed at, § 76. lxxi. 6, used by Chaucer in a good sense, 'she...was her (Nature's) chief patron of beaute, and chief ensample of all her werke and *monster*,' *Book of Duchess*, 912. Cp. Gk. *δακτύλος*, *δευκρός*.

Morians' land, *i. e.* Moors, blackmoors, for Ethiopia or Cush, § 114. lxviii. 31; § 99. lxxxvii. 4.

mouth—making *mouths*, altered by the printers from making *mows*, *i. e.* pouting faces, Fr. *moue*, so quoted by Johnson. Cp. *Tempest*, II. 2. 9, 'apes that *mow* and chatter at me,' and in Stage Direction, ib. III. 3, 'Enter the shapes with mocks and *mows*.' In *Hamlet*, II. 2, 'make *mows* at him,' but ib. IV. 4, 'makes *mouths* at the invisible event.' *multitude* of Thy mercy, § 44. v. 5; *multitude* of their ungodliness, § 44. v. 11; cp. *multitude* of sins, 1 Pet. iv. 8, now only used of persons.

muse—while I was thus *mus*ing the fire kindled, § 33. xxxix. 3, where it seems to mean 'moaning' or 'muttering' (Lat. *mussare*), rather than 'meditating.'

noisome pestilence, *i. e.* noxious, hurtful (an-*noy*, nuisance), § 117. xci. 3.

or ever your pots be made hot with thorns, *i. e.* before, § 53. lviii. 8; *or* is the same word as *ere*; so *or* ever is probably the same as 'ere ever,' 'before ever,' though it may also be for 'or ere,' which seems to be merely a reduplicated form of 'ere,' like 'before ere,' 'before or,' cp. 'but *and if*,' 'for because,' &c.

pate—fall on his own *pate*, *i. e.* crown of head, § 2. vii. 16 (perhaps connected with *paten*, a plate, &c.): now only in vulgar use.

poor—lo, the *poor* crieth and the Lord heareth, *i. e.* the man 'in misery,' meaning the Psalmist himself, § 78. xxxiv. 6, § 73. lxix. 30; often of 'captives,' &c., *i. e.* 'in trouble,' 'oppressed.'

- port*—within the *ports* of the daughter of Sion, *i. e.* gate, § 6r. ix. 14.
preach the law (*i. e.* declare the covenant), simply to 'speak,' 'tell of,' § 16. ii. 7; § 114 lxviii. 11, &c.
prevent—mine eyes *prevent* the night-watches, *i. e.* anticipate, *i. e.* I am risen up before the watches commence, § 130. cxix. 148. Cp. Lam. § 162. ii. 19, 'Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart.' § 22. xxi. 3, 'Thou shalt *prevent* him with blessings,' *i. e.* forestall his wishes: § 12. xviii. 18, 'they *prevented* me in the day of my trouble,' *i. e.* got before me to injure me. So '*prevent* us, O Lord, in all our doings' (Pr. Bk.) means, 'go before us to help us.'
proved me, *i. e.* tested, tempted, § 111. xcv. 9.
quarrel—judge my *quarrel*, *i. e.* cause of debate, right to reprisal, § 70. xxxv. 23. Lat. querela.
quick—go down *quick* into hell, *i. e.* alive, § 43. lv. 16; they had swallowed us up *quick*, § 90. cxxiv. 2, as in the Creed: so Spenser,
 'peeping close into the thick
 might see the moving of some *quick*,'
i. e. of some live animal: so 'a bank set with *quick*' (Mortimer), *i. e.* a hedge of living plants; so we say 'cut to the *quick*,' *i. e.* the living flesh: 'wick' is said to be still used in Yorkshire in sense of 'alive.'
quicken—make alive, § 130. cxix. 25, 37, 88, 149, 154, 159, &c.
ramping lion, *i. e.* tearing, pawing, A. V. 'ravening' (Lat. rapere, Eng. rob, &c.), § 69. xxii. 13.
refrain my lips, § 72. xl. 11; *refrain* my feet, § 130. cxix. 101, &c., 'bridle' or 'rein in,' *i. e.* 'check,' § 37. lxxvi. 10, 12.
reins—my *reins* also chasten me in the night-season, § 65. xvi. 8, &c., literally kidneys, to which the Hebrews ascribed the same feelings (knowledge, joy, pain and pleasure, &c.) as the Latins did to the 'liver,' and we do to the 'heart' and 'head,' *i. e.* seat of thought, feeling, emotion, &c.
remember themselves (old reflexive use), § 69. xxii. 27. Compare 'He repenteth Him,' Joel ii. 13, and 'endeavour ourselves' (Pr. Bk.). So 'turn thee unto me,' § 77. xxv. 15, &c.
require—I have *required* that they even mine enemies should not triumph over me, *i. e.* simply to 'ask' without idea of claiming as a right, § 71. xxxviii. 16; § 24. xxvii. 4.
reward—plenteously *rewardeth* the proud doer: *i. e.* requite with evil (or with good), § 57. xxxi. 26; § 56. xxviii. 4; § 48. liv. 5, &c. So '*reward* us after our iniquities' (Pr. Bk.).
rid me of mine enemies, § 76. lxxi. 2, *i. e.* set me free, cp. A. V. § 83. lxxxii. 4; § 142. cxliv. 7, 11 (Germ. retten).
right way, *i. e.* straight, plain or level path, free from danger, § 24. xxvii. 13.
room—hast set my feet in a large *room*, *i. e.* space, § 57. xxxi. 9; § 12. xviii. 36 (Germ. raum).
runagates—letteth the *runagates* continue in scarceness, § 114. lxviii. 6; *i. e.* renegades, rebellious run-a-ways (gate = way).
salvation, *i. e.* help, saving from mortal danger, victory, § 14. iii. 8, especially used of deliverance from captivity, § 110. xcvi. 3; § 111. xcv. 1. See *health*. Latimer uses 'helmet of *health*' for 'helmet of salvation,' Eph. vi. 17.
set by—setteth not by himself, *i. e.* set (store) by, value, esteem, § 5. xv. 4. Cp. Deut. xxvii. 16, set light by, *i. e.* value lightly.
shawm, (A. V. cornet,) reedpipe resembling the clarionet, § 110. xcvi. 7; it is coupled with trumpets and clarions in Spenser *F. Q.* I. 12.
soul—made a pit for my soul, *i. e.* life, § 70. xxxv. 7.
still—soul truly waiteth *still* upon God, *i. e.* in stillness or in silence (not 'yet' or 'all this time'), § 32. lxii. 1; so 'hold thee *still* in the Lord,' § 62. xxxvii. 7.
stomach—whoso hath a high stomach, *i. e.* pride, § 6. ci. 7.

strange children, *i.e.* foreign nations, § 12. xviii. 45; § 138. cxiv. 1. Cp. Gen. xlii. 7, 'made himself *strange*,' *i.e.* played the foreigner.

tabret (tabouret), timbrel, or tabor, a hoop with parchment stretched across it, sometimes with pieces of brass fixed in it to make a jingling noise: it was specially used in peaceful celebrations. A. V. lxxxi. 2 (§ 129.)

tarry thou the Lord's leisure, *i.e.* wait on the Lord, § 24. xxvii. 16.

tell the towers thereof, *i.e.* count them. So 'I may *tell* all my bones,' § 69. xxii. 17. 'Thou *tellest* my flittings,' § 51. lvi. 8. Cp. Milton, *L'Allegro*, 67,

'And every shepherd *tells* his tale,
under the hawthorn in the dale.'

testimonies—*i.e.* commandments, § 106. xciii. 6; § 123. cxxxii. 12.

there—fear came *there* upon them (there, emphatic, *i.e.* at that place), § 36. xlviii. 5. So *there* the Lord promised his blessing, *i.e.* to it, § 96. cxxxiii. 4.

thereafter as a man feareth, so &c., *i.e.* accordingly, § 34. xc. 11. See *after*.

to . . . ward (separated)—to us-ward, § 72. xl. 6.

truth—shall the dust declare thy truth, *i.e.* fulfilment of promise, § 13. xxxii. 10, and note.

unawares—at unawares to me, *i.e.* unexpectedly, § 70. xxxv. 15.

unto—my goods are nothing *unto* Thee, *i.e.* in comparison with, § 65. xvi. 2.

vanity—speak *vanity*, *i.e.* falsehood, § 31. xii. 2. So § 57. xxxi. 7; § 158. Jonah ii. 7, where 'lying *vanities*' mean 'vain idols.'

visit, *i.e.* have regard to, send good to, § 9. viii. 4.

wholesome strength of His right hand, *i.e.* saving, § 21. xx. 6 (Germ. heilsam). See *health*.

within—the king's daughter is all glorious *within*, *i.e.* within doors, § 23. xlv. 14.

. For fuller information, consult Nares' *Glossary*, Wedgwood's *Etymology*, and especially the *Bible Word-Book*, by Eastwood & Wright (Macmillan, 1866), to which several of these references and illustrations are due.

INDEX I.

Of difficult Passages in Prayer-Book Version.

SECT.

- 61 ix. 6. O thou enemy, *destructions are come to a perpetual end*, even as the cities which *thou* hast destroyed; their memorial is perished with them.
- 61 x. 17. Break thou the jaws of the ungodly and malicious; take away his ungodliness and thou shalt find none.
- 1 xi. 3. For the foundations will be cast down; and what hath the righteous done?
- 12 xviii. 26. with the froward thou shalt learn frowardness.
29. with the help of my God I shall leap over the wall.
45. the strange children shall dissemble with me.
- 69 xxii. 21. Thou hast heard me from among the horns of the unicorns.
29, 30. all such as be *fat* upon earth have eaten and worshipped; all they that go down into the dust shall kneel before him, and no man hath quickened his own soul.
- 4 xxiv. 6. This is the generation of them that seek him, even of them that seek thy face, O *Jacob*.
- 7 xxix. 7. The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire. [The connexion is obscured throughout the Psalm.]
- 57 xxxi. 22. Thou shalt hide them privily by thine own presence from the provoking of all men.
23. Thanks be to the Lord, for he hath shewed me marvellous great kindness in a *strong city*.
24. and when I *made haste*, I said, I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes.
- 13 xxxii. 7. but in the great waterfloods *they* shall not come nigh him.
10. be not ye like to horse and mule, which have no understanding, whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle lest they fall upon thee.
- 70 xxxv. 13. my prayer shall *turn into* mine own bosom.
- 71 xxxviii. 17. And I truly am set in the plague.
- 72 xl. 9, 10. Then said I, lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should fulfil thy will.
- 67 xlii. 8. therefore will I remember thee concerning the land of Jordan and the little hill of Hermon. One deep calleth another because of the noise of the waterspouts, &c.
- 119 xlv. 20. when thou hast smitten us into the *place of dragons*.
23 xlv. 14. the king's daughter is all glorious *within*.
35 xlvii. 4. The rivers of the flood *thereof* shall make glad the city of God.
36 xlviii. 2. upon the *north* side lieth the city of the great king.

SHECT.

- 66 xlix. 4. I will incline mine ear to the parable, and *shew my dark speech* upon the harp.
5. When the *wickedness of my heels* compasseth me round about.
14. they lie in the hell like sheep, death gnaweth upon them, and the righteous shall have domination over them in the morning: their beauty shall consume in the sepulchre out of their dwelling.
- 75 li. 4. against thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified in thy saying, and clear when thou art judged.
- 84 liii. 6. They were afraid *where no fear was*; for God hath broken the bones of him that besieged thee.
- 52 lvii. 5. I lie even among the children of men that are *set on fire*, whose words are spears and arrows.
- 53 lviii. 8. or ever your pots be made hot with thorns; so let indignation vex him even as a thing that is raw.
- 54 lix. 14. And in the evening they will return, grin like a dog, and go about the city.
- 125 lx. 4. thou hast given a token for such as fear thee.
6. God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice and divide Sichem and mete out the valley of Succoth.
8. Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; Philistia, be thou glad of me.
- 114 lxviii. 13. Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove.
- lxviii. 14. When the Almighty scattered kings for their sake, then were they as white as snow in Salmon.
- lxviii. 27. there is little Benjamin their ruler, and the princes of Judah their counsel.
- 30, 31. When the company of the spearmen and the multitude of the mighty are scattered abroad among the beasts of the people, so that they humbly bring pieces of silver,...then shall the princes come out of Egypt, the Morians' land shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.
- 76 lxxi. 6. I am become as it were a *monster* unto many.
- 120 lxxiv. 15. Thou smotest the heads of *Leviathan* in pieces, and gavest him to be meat for the *people in the wilderness*.
- 37 lxxvi. 4. Thou art of more honour and might than the hills of the *robbers*.
- 81 lxxvii. 10. And I said, It is mine own infirmity, but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most Highest.
- 122 lxxx. 2. before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasses stir up thy strength, and come and help us.
- 83 lxxxii. 6. I have said, Ye are gods, and ye are all the children of the most Highest.
- 99 lxxxvii. 3. I will think upon Rahab and Babylon with them that know me.
4. Behold ye the Philistines also; and they of Tyre with the Morians; lo, there was he born.
7. The singers also and trumpeters shall he rehearse: All my fresh springs shall be in thee.
- 58 lxxxviii. 4. *free* among the dead, like unto them that are wounded.
- 124 lxxxix. 36. He shall stand fast for evermore as the moon: and as the *faithful witness* in heaven.
- 34 xc. 5. as soon as thou scatterest them, they are even as a *sleep*.
11. for even thereafter as a *man feareth* so is thy displeasure.
- 82 xciv. 15. until righteousness turn again unto judgment: all such as are true of heart shall follow it.

SECT.

- 82 xciv. 20. wilt thou have anything to do with the *stool of wickedness*?
- 133 cvi. 28. they ate the offerings of the *dead*.
- 74 cix. 5. let *Satan* stand at his right hand.
- 10 'cx. 3. In the day of thy power shall the people offer thee freewill offerings with an holy worship; *the dew of thy birth* is of the womb of the morning.
7. He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up his head.
- 103 cxvi. 12. I will receive the *cup of salvation* and call upon the name of the Lord.
- 130 cxix. 83. For I am become like a bottle in the smoke.
96. I see that all things *come to an end*, but thy commandment is exceeding broad.
131. I opened my mouth and *drew in my breath*: for my delight was in thy commandments.
- 85 cxx. 4. Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech, and to have my habitation among the tents of Kedar.
- 92 cxxv. 3. for the *rod* of the ungodly cometh not into the lot of the righteous.
- 93 cxxvi. 5. Turn our captivity, O Lord; *as the rivers in the south*.
- 94 cxxvii. 3. for so he giveth his beloved sleep.
- 91 cxxix. 3, 4. The plowers plowed upon my back and made long furrows: but the righteous Lord hath hewn the *snares* of the ungodly in pieces.
- 123 cxxxii. 6. lo, we heard of the same at Ephrata and found it in the wood.
- 96 cxxxiii. 3. like as the dew of Hermon which fell upon the hill of Sion.
- 41 cxli. 6. But let not their precious balms break my head; yea, I will pray yet against their wickedness.

INDEX II.

*Of Passages from the Old Testament quoted or referred to in illustration of
the Psalms.*

	PAGE		PAGE
Genesis i.	349, 350	Exodus xvii. 7	270
i. 2, 9, 10	16	xvii. 9, 10	417
i. 26, 27	25	xvii. 10	212
iv. 23, 24 (<i>translated</i>)	395	xviii. 1—6	316
x. 2	214	xix.	363
xii. 2	64	xix. 6	165
xiv. 10	103	xx. 18—24	19
xiv. 20	34	xxi. 6	48, 123
xiv. 22	371	xxi. 24—27	46
xix. 1	188	xxii. 8	123
xix. 24	9	xxiii. 16	322, 368
xix. 28	64	xxiii. 17	244
xx. 3	19	xxiii. 28	251
xx. 7	374	xxvii. 20, 21	243
xxii. 17	241	xxix. 7	242
xxiv. 60	241	xxxii—xxxiv.	356
xxxvii—l.	374	xxxii. 26	188
xl. 20	63	xxxii. 27	33
xl. 15	119	xxxii. 32	189
xl. 9	85	xxxiv. 6	347, 368
Exodus ii. 14	218	xxxiv. 6, 7	264
iii. 16	289	xxxiv. 23	244
iv. 21	196	Leviticus ii. 1	419
ix. x.	319	ii. 2	442
ix. 23	319	iii. 2, 8, 13	129
xiii. 21, 22	316	xxii. 24	303
xiv—xvi.	355	xxiii. 43	322
xiv. 13	81	xxiv. 16	434
xiv. 14, 25	311	Numbers ii. 2, 17	33
xiv. 24	274	ii. 18—22	297
xv. (<i>translated</i>)	395	v. 21	205
xvi. 16	317	vi. 24	271
xvii.	356	x.	275
xvii. 6	32, 316		

	PAGE		PAGE
Numbers x. 8, 9, 10, 35	33	Joshua xv. 63	244
x. 10	303	xvii. 1	399
x. 34	274	xvii. 16	62
xi. 4, 5	316	xviii. 1	320
xi. 20	356	xxiii. 10	311
xi. 31—35	317, 318		
xii. 8	162, 164	Judges ii. 12, 13	320
xiv.	356	iii. 8, 10	417
xiv. 9	310	iv. v.	312
xvi. 13	218	iv. 3, 13	62
xvi. 23—34	109	v. (<i>translated</i>)	397
xvi. 32, 33	235	vi, vii.	312
xix. 16—18	196	vii. 25	313
xx.	366	viii. 4	32
xx. 13	357	viii. 5—10; 18—21	313
xx. 7	376	ix. 48	276
xx. 8	316	xii. 15	399
xxi. 26—28	321	xvi. 21	430
xxiii. 10	72		
xxv.	357	Ruth ii. 4	236
xxv. 7, 13	33	iv. 4	184
xxxiv. 6	359		
Deuteronomy i. 17	217	I. Samuel i. 7	205
i. 30	311	ii. 1—10 (<i>translated</i>)	402
ii. 30	196	ii. 29	78
iii. 9	21	iv.	61
iii. 22	311	iv. 3	300, 320
vii. 2	388	iv. 4, 5	33, 62, 173
viii. 12, 14, 17	75	iv. 10	321
ix. 3	31	iv. 21, 22	320
x. 14	279	v.	417
xi. 29	314	viii. 22	96
xii. 9	270	ix. 15	184
xvi. 16	244	x. 6, 11	96
xx. 2—4	34	x. 25	50
xxviii. 58	434	xiii. 9	32, 34
xxxii. 1—42 (<i>translated</i>)	409	xiii. 12	61
xxxiii. 9	33	xiv. 14	61
xxxiii. 17	97	xiv. 24—31	32
xxxiii. 28	277	xv. 22	184
xxxiii. 29	280	xvi. 11	9
xxxiv. 5	440	xvi. 17	386
Joshua i. 1	440	xvii. 36	71
i. 4	359	xviii. 6	54
iii.	363	xviii. 6, 7	275
iii. 16	418	xviii. 9, 11	8
vi. 16	33	xix. 1, 11	8
x. 11	39, 276	xix. 11	186, 441
		xxi. 10	439, 441

	PAGE
I. Samuél xxii.	441
xxii. 6	441
xxii. 19, 20	8, 34
xxii. 23; xxiii. 12, 19; xxvi. 2; xxvii. 1	8
xxiii. 6, 9	32, 34
xxiv. 4	9
xxiv. 6	46
xxiv. 17	12
xxvi. 7	9
xxvi. 11	46
II. Samuel i. 18	53, 441
i. 19—27 (<i>translated</i>)	5, 53
ii. 23	55
iii. 27	188
iii. 33, 34 (<i>translated</i>)	5, 55
v. 3	50
v. 6	244
v. 8	70
vi.	12, 13
vi. 2, 18	12, 13, 173
vi. 7	17, 417
vi. 14, 28	32, 34
vi. 18; vi. 21	5
vii.	56, 299, 301
vii. 5—17	96
vii. 10—16	301
vii. 13	47
vii. 12, 13	152
vii. 14	304
vii. 17	304
vii. 25, 26	13
vii. 27	184
vii. 29	5
viii.	34
viii. 3—16	35
viii. 13	32, 440
x. 12	310
x. 12, 26—31	34
x. 16	440
xi. 11	119
xii.	34, 441
xii. 17, 21	205
xv. 2	19
xvii. 27—29	47, 70
xxi. 17	301
xxii. 12	4, 43
xxiii. 1—7 (<i>translated</i>)	5, 55
xxiii. 15	32

	PAGE
I. Kings i. 31	32
ii. 1—11	55
ii. 16	300
ii. 26	34
iii. 9, 28	148, 149
viii. 6	173
ix. 41	441
x. 26, 29	62
xi. 31	48
xi. 36, 39	153, 301
xii. 28	314
xiii. 4	248
xiv. 11	126
xviii. 42	179
xxii. 48; xxiv. 2	91, 415
II. Kings ix. 36	126
xiv. 25—28	60
xv. 4	301
xvi. 5	314
xvi. 18	130
xviii. xx.	407
xviii. 26	101
xviii. 33, 35	216
xix. 18	217
xxiii. 3	130
xxiv. 9	171
xxiv. 12	168
I. Chronicles vi, xxv.	425
vi. 33, 37	440
ix. 27, 34	243
xii. 27	32
xii. 26—28	34
xv. 16—22	440
xvi. 8—36	67
xvi. 35, 36	433
xvii. 9	47
xvii. 15	304
xix. 6—19	440
xxii. 8	34
xxii. 9	49
xxvii. 5	34
xxviii. 1—10	55
xxix. 29	441
xxix. 22	55
xxix. 30	132
II. Chronicles v.	435
vi. 3	32

	PAGE		PAGE
II. Chronicles vi. 13	130	Job iii. 23	135
vi. 41, 42	300	v. 1	302
ix. 1, 21	440	v. 6, 7	196
ix. 29	48, 441	v. 21	179
xiii. 12—15	33	vi. 15, 17, 18	239
xxv. 12	104	vii. 19	85
xxx. 10, 11	274	viii. 18	145
xxxvi. 9	171	x. 1	169
Ezra i. 5	299	x. 8—11	287
ii. 1, 63	244	xi. 13	212
ii. 59	247	xi. 17	145
ii. 62	189	xii. 4	283
iii. 4	250	xii. 10	134
iii. 6, 8, 9	243	xii. 21	362
iii. 10	245	xiii. 16	227
iv.	251	xiii. 28; xiv. 6	85
iv. 4, 5; v. 1	237, 240	xiv. 2	86, 370
vi. 3	372	xiv. 3	368
vi. 15, 16	273	xiv. 4	196
vi. 17	274	xv. 15	302
vii. 16—18, 27; viii. 36	372	xv. 16	209
ix. 9	24	xvi. 10	173
Nehemiah i. 3	295	xvii. 13, 14; xix. 8	135
ii. 9; iii. 7	372	xix. 13	134
ii. 13, 17	295	xix. 20	205
ii. 14	89	xix. 26, 27	165
iii. 15	90	xx. 8, 9	210
iv.	310, 312	xx. 12	79
iv. 2	314	xxi. 7—14	164
iv. 7	310, 312	xxii. 13	143
iv. 17, 18	389	xxvi. 6	287
vi. 1	312, 373, 387	xxvi. 11	16, 39
vi. 14	291	xxvi. 12	246
vii. 5	247	xxvii. 10	145
vii. 39—42	274	xxvii. 15	321
viii. 14	250	xxviii. 10	294
ix.	292	xxviii. 12—20	208
Esther i. 19; ix. 27	390	xxix. 7	430
ii. 9, 17	66	xxx. 16	169
Job i. 1	429	xxx. 29	205
i. 4	63	xxxi. 40	433
i. 6	21, 302	xxxiii. 14	82
i. 12	196	xxxiii. 21	105, 174
ii. 6	186	xxxiii. 30	121
iii—xxxi.	83	xxxiv. 21, 22	287
		xxxvi. 16	40, 72
		xxxviii. 7	21, 302
		xxxviii. 8, 26	350
		xxxviii. 12	351

	PAGE		PAGE
Job xxxviii. 22	276, 386	Isaiah xiv. 32	246
xxxviii. 26—30	100	xvii. 14	75
xxxix. 20	193	xviii—xxiii.	246
xl. 15—24	293	xix. 21—25	246, 278
xl. 5	82	xxi. 1	359
xli. 5	352	xxi. 5	189
xli. 31	418	xxi. 6, 8, 9	219
Proverbs i. 12	235	xxi. 13, 16	224
iv. 17	209	xxii. 8	300
vi. 17, 18	19	xxii. 11	89
viii. 4	422	xxii. 15—19	113, 206
viii. 25	86	xxv. 4	69
viii. 27—29	16	xxvi. 2	252
x. 22	240	xxvii. 1	293
xii. 28	165	xxviii. 11	313
xv. 16	145	xxviii. 16	314
xvii. 19	13, 15	xxviii. 21	252
xx. 7	426	xxviii. 21	87
xx. 24	145	xxix. 8	86
xxi. 4	19	xxix. 17	300
xxiv. 19	145	xxix. 23	87
xxv. 1	435	xxx. 1—7	429
xxvi. 6	209	xxx. 27—30	20
xxviii. 9	191	xxxi. 1	384
xxviii. 25	19	xxxi. 1—3	429
xxix. 14	32	xxxii. 6	220
Eccles. xii. 12	327	xxxii. 16, 17	149
Isaiah i. 5	231	xxxiii. 6	132
ii. 2—4	246	xxxiii. 14—16	16
ii. 7	62	xxxiii. 18	92
iii. 1	374	xxxv.	275
iii. 13—15	217	xxxvii. 27	86, 236
iv. 10	116	xxxviii. 9—20 (<i>translated</i>)	407
v. 1	441	xxxviii. 18	75, 255
v. 17	191	xl—lxvi.	156
vi. 3	21	xl. 3	275
vi. 11	87, 293	xl. 19, 20	233, 291
vii. 9	155	xl. 22	349
viii. 6	90	xl. 31	347
ix. 5	90	xli. 22, 31	347, 349
x. 32	249	xli. 7; xlii. 17; xliv. 14—17	291
xi. 11—xii. 3	99	xlii. 10	386
xiv. 1	280	xlii. 15	294
xiv. 12—14	209	xliv. 14—17	233
xiv. 13	91	xliv. 20	205
xiv. 26	322	xliv. 28	155, 245
		xl. 1	155
		xl. 2	360
		xlvi. 1	277

	PAGE		PAGE
Isaiah xlix. 15	69, 144, 346	Jeremiah xxiii. 23, 24	286
l. 5	184	xxv. 15	98
l. 6	236	xxvi. 1—6	313
li. 1	277	xxvi. 18, 19	124
li. 9	246, 278, 293	xxviii. 15	106
li. 23	236, 281	xxix. 2	429
lii. 10	418	xxix. 22	205
liv. 8	75	xxx. 17	16, 238
lv. 12	267	xxxi. 9	70
lviii. 8	16	xxxi. 10, 36	242
lix. 12	196	xxxi. 20	345
lix. 17, 18	285	xxxi. 33—38	231, 232, 305
lx. 15	91	xxxii. 19	86
lxiii. 16	69	xxxii. 39, 40	232
lxiv. 11	173	xxxiii. 11	250
lxv. 10	72	xxxiii. 20, 21	305
lxv. 15	205	xxxvi. 2, 8	184
lxvi. 3	442	xxxviii.	186
Jeremiah i. 13	125	xxxix. 1, 3, 14	421
iii. 16	232	xl. 5—8	274
iv—vi.	125, 415	xlvi. 2—12	261, 420, 429
iv. 10	186	xliv. 7, 8, 20, 21	417
iv. 16, 17, 20	126	l. 17	220
iv. 25—29	125	li.	432
v. 6	126	li. 26	262, 303
vi. 8; vii. 3—8	17	Lamentations i—v. (<i>translated</i>)	420
vi. 22	91	Ezekiel i. 18	87
vi. 23	126	vi. 3	224
vii. 4; viii. 8	136	x. 1	39
viii. 17	124	xi. 19	232
viii. 19	131	xiii. 9	139, 189, 247
ix. 8	223	xvii. 4	168
ix. 11; x. 22	291	xvii. 12	429
ix. 13—16	227	xviii. xix, xxii, xxiv.	313
x. 3—5	233	xix. 4	215
x. 13	377	xix. 6, 8	168
x. 24, 25	251, 296	xx. 15; xxiv. 21	279
xi. 15	165	xxiv. 21, 23	321
xv. 1	264	xxiv. 25	91
xv. 13	290	xxviii. 2—10	217
xvii. 19	188	xxix. 3	278, 293
xviii. 16	290	xxix. 21	97, 301
xx. 10, 11, 18	131	xxxiv. 13; xxxvi. 4; xxxviii. 2	224
xx. 15	63	xxxix. 18	174
xxi. 12	19	xliv. 7	264
xxii. 18	321	xlvi. 20	359
xxii. 24, 28	131, 168		
xxiii. 13	426		

	PAGE		PAGE
Daniel v.	218	Micah i. 2	21
x. 3	104	iii. 3	220
Hosea ii. 14, 15	72, 171	iv. 13	97
ii. 19	310	v. 2	300
iv. 15—17	314	vii. 1—6	107
iv. 18	280	Nahum i. 7	140
vii. 5	63	i. 15	224
vii. 12	281	iii. 10	175
vii. 14	389	iii. 17	193
vii. 16	315, 320	Habakkuk i. 6—10 (<i>translated</i>)	415
x. 4	189	i. 11, 16	80, 143
x. 14	249	ii. 1, 2	309
xiii. 14	167	ii. 3, 4	416
Joel i. 6	293	ii. 15	429
ii. 17	296	iii. (<i>translated</i>)	415
ii. 20	193	Haggai i.	273
iii. 3	175	i. 10, 11; ii. 19	239
iii. 7	261	ii. 7, 8, 9	309
iii. 11	348	ii. 20—22	289
Amos ii. vii.	314	ii. 23	245
iii. 9—12	17	Zechariah i. 18	97
iv. 1	174	ii. 4, 5	238
v. 3	52	iii. 1	191
v. 21	196	iii. 8; iv; vi. 9—15	288
vii. 17	165	iv. 6—10	252, 273
ix. 3	277	viii. 3, 9	245
ix. 6	350	viii. 13	205
Obadiah 8, 9	417	viii. 22, 23	245, 257
ix	175	ix. 14	93
Jonah ii. (<i>translated</i>)	405	xiv.	124
Micah i. 1—4	137	xiv. 9, 16	206
		Malachi i. 11	373, 390

GENERAL INDEX

The numerals in general refer to sections, but when the reference is to the page, p. precedes the number, as p. 430; n. indicates that the subject is treated in a note.

- ABNER, lament over, 19
 Absalom, David's love for, 14; Psalms composed during rebellion of, 14, 15
 Accuser, place of in trials, 74
 Adder, corrupt judges compared to, 53
 Alphabetical Psalms, 61, 62, 77, 78, 130, 135, 136, 147, 162
 Altar, custom of singing round during sacrifice, 55
 Ammonites, 127
 Aram = Syrian, 11
 Ark, carried to Jebus, 3—5; Psalm sung during the procession, 3; capture of, 128 n.
 Army, organization of under David, 3
 Assur or Assyria, 127. See *Sennacherib*.
 Astarte, 54
 Authorship of Psalms, p. 438
- Baal-peor, 133
 Babylon, captivity in, 64—66; Psalms relating to, 64—89; cruelty of, 100
 Baka, valley of, 68
 Basan, 114 n.; bulls of, 69 n.
 Battle, hymns of, 10, 11, 21, 22
 Beast of the reeds, 114
 Behemoth, 120
 Bethshan, 54
 Birds, proverb of, 1
 Blessing. See *Righteousness*.
 Book, roll of, 72 n.
 Books, division of Psalter into, Appendix A, p. 431
 Bottle = wine-skin, 130
 Bow, song of the, 18
- Candle, 12, 123 n.
 Captivity, beginning of, 41; king and nobles carried to Babylon, 67, 68; lessons learned from, 80, p. 231; permanent effect of, on national character, 117; lessons of, 133, 134
 Caryatides, metaphorically used, 17
 Chaldaea, exiles in, 84
 Chaldeans, description of in Habakkuk, 167; origin of, 167
 Chariots, not used by Israelites before the monarchy, 12 n, 21; Assyrian chariots destroyed, 35 n.
 Cherubim, the throne of God, 12 n, 122
 Children of men, explained, 84
 Citizens, roll of, 99 n.
 Cloud in wilderness, 128 n.
 Coals of fire = lightning, 12
 Collections, smaller in psalter, p. 433
 Communion with God, how understood by Moses, 64—66; during the captivity, 69; by Job, 80—82
 Composite Psalms, p. 431
 Corner-stone, explained, 101 n.
 Covenant, new, p. 231
 Crocodile = king of Babylon, 114
 Creation, God's glory in, 8, 9; lyric description of, 132
 Cup, *i.e.*, judgment of God, 38 n, 48 n; of salvation, explained, 103 n.
 Cush, the Benjamite, 9
 Cushman, 161
 Cyrus, the Anointed, p. 233; Jewish sympathy with, *ib.*; liberates the Jews, 90

- Darling=*soul*, 69 *n*, 70 *n*.
 David, character of, p. 3; introduction to Psalms of, *ib*; Psalms assigned to, §§ 1—29; list of, pp. 5—7; metaphors used by, p. 6; influence of on Psalter, p. 6; persecuted by Saul, 1; contrasted with Saul, 3; flight from Absalom, 3, 4; court of, 6; Psalms of Nature by, 7—9; early life, 9; his moral exaltation, 10—12; wars of with heathen, 10—12; with Edom, 11; thanksgiving of, in old age, 12; repentance of, 13; last words of, 20; ancestor and type of Messiah, 2, p. 150
 Dead, offerings of the, explained, 133 *n*.
 Death, how regarded by the Jews, 33
 Deborah, song of, connected with Ps. lxxviii. 114, 156
 Degrees, songs of, 85—108
 Desert=*the south*, 38
 Devils=*gods of evil*, 133
 Didactic Psalms. See *Psalms*.
 Dogs, eastern, 54 *n*.
 Doxology, p. 433
 Dragon. See *Crocodile*.
 Dream, life compared to, 34

 Earth, Hebrew idea of, 4 *n*.
 Ears opened, explained, 72 *n*.
 Edom, David's war with, 4; cause of rebellion of, p. 153; alliance with Nebuchadnezzar, 100, p. 429 *n*.
 Egypt, exodus from, 81, 137, 138, 144, 146
 Elohim, explained, 3
 Endor, 127 *n*.
 Ephraim, guardians of Ark, 122; supremacy lost by, 128; cowardice of, 128
 Ephrata, 123
 Ever, *for ever*, used of a limited time, 22 *n*, 23 *n*, 63
 Exclusiveness, danger of, in religion, 53; ceases during captivity, p. 233, § 99; revival of, 151
 Ewald, services of in Biblical criticism, see Preface; reasons for adopting his arrangement of the Psalms, *ib*.

 Face=*look of displeasure*, 33 *n*.
 Fire, of war, 128 *n*; devouring fire=*lightning*, 2; so flaming fire, 132
 Flowers, life compared with, 34 *n*.

 Fool=*unbeliever*, 84 *n*
 Forest, *i. e.*, Lebanon=*the north*, 123 *n*
 Future life. See *Immortality*.

 Gall, 73 *n*.
 Gates, importance attached to size of, 3; place of resort, 73 *n*.
 Gazelle, name of Jonathan, 18
 Gebal, 127 *n*.
 Genesis, 9
 Gilboa, Saul's death upon, 18
 Glory, shout of the seraphim in heaven, 7; glory=*soul*, 52 *n*.=*Ark*, 128 *n*.
 Gods, false. See *Idolatry*.
 Gods=*judges*, 16, 53=*princes*, 83
 Grasshopper, driven away as, 74 *n*.

 Habakkuk, psalm of, 161
 Hades, 64—66
 Hagarenes, 127
 Hallelujah psalms, p. 435
 Heathen, wider views concerning, 83
 Heaven, Hebrew conception of, 12 *n*.
 Hail, 12 *n*.
 Hebrews, their idea of the world, 4; distinguished from other nations, 7—9; lyric poetry of, 7—9; peculiar character of their religion, 131, 132
 Hell, 28 *n*, 64—66
 Hermon=*the north*, 38 *n*, 67
 Hezekiah, reformation under, p. 100; alliance of with Egypt, *ib*; regarded as the Anointed, p. 155; psalm of, § 159
 Horns=*honour*, 38 *n*.
 Hosts, God of, 3
 Hyssop, use of, 75

 Idolatrous faction, 40
 Idolatry, encouraged by kings of Judah, 40—42; ceases after captivity, p. 231, §§ 102, 107
 Immortality, first revelation of, p. 151, §§ 64—66; not known to Moses or David, *ib*.
 Imprecatory Psalms, 73, 7, 151 and p. 159
 Infancy, its unconscious praise of God, 9
 Invitatory psalm, 111
 Ishbosheth, death of, 11
 Ishmaelites, 127 *n*.
 Isles, 63, 107 *n*.
 Israelites, character of, p. 94. See *Hebrews*.

- Jackals, 50; *place of*, explained, 119 *n*.
 Jacob's glory, 115 *n*.
 Jael, 156
 Jebus. See *Jerusalem*.
 Jehoiaakim, carried into captivity, 67, 68, and p. 429 *n*.
 Jehovah, meaning of name, 3
 Jeremiah, imprisonment of, 73; apparent want of patriotism, p. 231
 Jerusalem, capture and consecration of, 11; superstitious reverence for, 5; corruption of, before captivity, 43; rebuilding of, p. 231; surrounded by hills, 92; re-peopling of, 94; compactness of, 98; the metropolis of God's kingdom, 99; conspiracies against, 127
 Jeshurun, 160
 Jonah, psalm of, 158
 Jonathan, 10; David's lament over, 18
 Joseph = 12 tribes, 129
 Josiah, reforms of, 59, 160
 Judah, alone survives captivity, p. 231
 Judges, corruption of, 53

 Kadesh = *the south*, 7
 Kedar, 85
 King, prayer for, 49; oath by name of, 50
 Kingdom of God, 37 *n*, 99, 107, 113, 126, 143
 Kirjath-jearim, 12

 Lamech, song of, 154
 Lamentations, 162
 Lamp. See *Candle*.
 Law, Book of, becomes fundamental part of the Constitution, 59; superstitious reverence of rebuked, 59, 151; commentaries on, *ib*.
 Lebanon = *the North*, 7, 123 *n*.
 Levites, march of, p. 33
 Leviathan, 120, 132; legend of, 120 *n*.
 Lion = *violent man*, 2, 61, 64, 70
 Living God, contrasted with idols, 67 *n*.
 Lord of Hosts, 3
 Lot, children of, 127 *n*.
 Lot of the righteous, explained, 92
 Lots, casting of, 69 *n*.

 Machir, 156 *n*.
 Magog, 85

 Manasseh, his sensuality and cruelty, 40—63
 Marriage Psalm, 23
 Melchizedek, king and priest, 10, and note, p. 33
 Meribah, 133
 Meshech, 85
 Messiah, expectations of, notes on pp. 94, 150
 Messianic kingdom = *reign of righteousness under descendant of David*, 2, 37, 63, 126. See *Messiah*.
 Michal, 12
 Michmash, 10
 Midianites, 127 *n*.
 Mire, 73
 Miriam, song of, 155
 Mizar, 67 *n*.
 Moab, David's war with, 11; rebellion of, p. 153; allied with Edom, 127
 Monarchy opposed by Samuel, p. 95
 Morality, inseparable from religion, 4
 Moses, song of, 155
 Musical accompaniment to Psalms, p. 441

 Name of God, 48 *n*.
 Nathan, promise of, 16, 124
 Nature, Psalms of, 7—9
 Nehemiah rebuilds walls of Jerusalem, 127; his greatness, 127
 Net, 40, 41, 52, 57, 69, 77, 116
 Nineveh, destruction of, 61

 Og, 145, 146
 Oil, of anointing, 18 *n*.
 Oil, used at festivities, 25, 41 *n*, 105
 Olive tree, righteous compared to, 46
 Oreb, 127

 Palestine, drought of, 10
 Paran, mountains of, 161
 Persecutions of the followers of Jehovah, 41, 44; during captivity, 51, 57, 70. See also *Manasseh*.
 Persia, hostility of, 119, 127
 Philistia, David's war with, 11
 Phineas, 133
 Pilgrim Psalms, 85—108
 Pilgrimage from Babylon, 101, 103, 114
 Pit, 2, 73 *n*, 82
 Poor = *miserable*, 29 *n*.

- Praises of Israel, explained, 69 *n.*
 Prayer, importance attached to, after captivity, p. 233
 Priesthood united with kingship, 2, 10 *n.*;
 military character of, p. 33
 Priests, massacre of, 10 *n.*
 Punishment, connexion of, with sin, 73
- Rahab = *Egypt*, 99 *n.*, 120 *n.*, 124 *n.*
 Recurrence of Psalms, p. 432
 Resurrection, unknown to early Hebrews, 58.
 See *Immortality*.
 Righteousness and blessing, 4 *n.*, 61, 63, 84;
 apparently severed from, 64—66
 River = *Euphrates*, 63
 Room, large, explained, 58
- Sabaoth, Lord of, 3
 Sacrifice, superstitious view of rebuked, 59;
 abolition of, the dawn of a higher truth,
 72, 73
 Saints = *Israelites*, 65 *n.*
 Salem, meaning of, 37
 Salmon, 114
 Samaritans, persecutions from, 92, 93; con-
 federate with the Ammonites, 127
 Samuel, objections of to monarchy, 3
 Sanballat, 127
 Scythians, invasion of, 54
 Scythopolis, 54
 Sea = *west*, 118 *n.*
 Sennacherib, invasion of, 35; Psalms con-
 nected with, 35—39; new thoughts arising
 from, 35
 Septuagint, p. 436
 Serpent-charmers, 53 *n.*
 Shechem, 11
 Shepherd = *nomad*, 159
 Shields = *rulers*, 115; employed to decorate
 strongholds, 37 *n.*
 Sickness, Hebrew view of, 55
 Sides of the north, explained, 36 *n.*
 Sihon, 145, 146
 Siloam, pool of, 35
 Simoom, 1
 Sin, true conception of, 75; permission of,
 by God, 75 *n.*
 Sion, sanctity of, 35, 36, 96, 114; towers of,
 36; impregnability of, 39; beauty of, 36,
 59, 123. See *Jerusalem*.
 Sirion, 7
 Snow, rare in Palestine, 114 *n.* See *Hail*.
 Solomon, meaning of name, 16; early reign
 of, 16
 Sons of God, 7
 Soul = *life*, 73 *n.*
 Strongholds, custom of decorating with
 shields, 37 *n.*
 Succoth, 11
 Superscription of Psalms, 2, 11, 79, pp. 431
 437
 Superstitions rebuked, 5, 59
- Taanach, promontory of, 156
 Tabor, 124
 Tarshish, ships of, explained, 36
 Teman = *south*, 161
 Temple, reverence for, after Assyrian inva-
 sion, 35—39; dread of separation from,
 among the Hebrews, 35, 47; longing for,
 in captivity, 49; king's throne in, 56; sup-
 posed magic of name, 59; 2nd Temple, de-
 dication of, 114, 115; defiled by the hea-
 then, 120; glory of, 126; third court of, 144
 Thorns, fire of, 53
 Thunder, how regarded by the Hebrews, 7
 Tongues (false), 43—53; compared to swords
 and arrows, 45, 52; to a razor, 46; to burn-
 ing coals, 85
 Tyre, wealth of, 23 *n.*
 Twice = *often*, 32
- Understanding, synonymous with godliness,
 84 *n.*
 Unity of God, effect of belief in, on the Jews,
 pp. 94, 150
 Uriah, David's repentance after death of, 13
- Vanities = *idols*, 57
 Vessel, broken, metaphor in Jeremiah, 57
 Vile person, explained, 84 *n.*
 Vindictive expressions in Psalms, 40—63, 43
 —53, 151
 Vine, metaphorical use of word, 122
 Vision of Judgment, 2, 59
- Washpot, Moab is My, explained, 11 *n.*

- Waters = *enemies*, 93; of Israel, explained,
114 *n*.
Wicked, prosperity of, 64—66; no cause of
fear, 66; perplexity caused by, 80—82
Wickedness, connexion of, with misery, 62
World and the godly, 64—66
Zedekiah, captivity of, 68; end of, 79 *n*.
Zerubbabel regarded as the Anointed, p. 155,
p. 352; rebuilds Temple, 119—126, 123;
troubles of, 124; wider ideas of, 104
Zion. See *Sion* and *Jerusalem*.
Zoan, 128

*The numerals in general refer to sections, but when the reference is to the page,
p. precedes the number, as p. 430; n. indicates that the subject is treated in
a note.*

THE END.

THE KING'S LIBRARY



3000024010

DATE DUE

--	--	--

